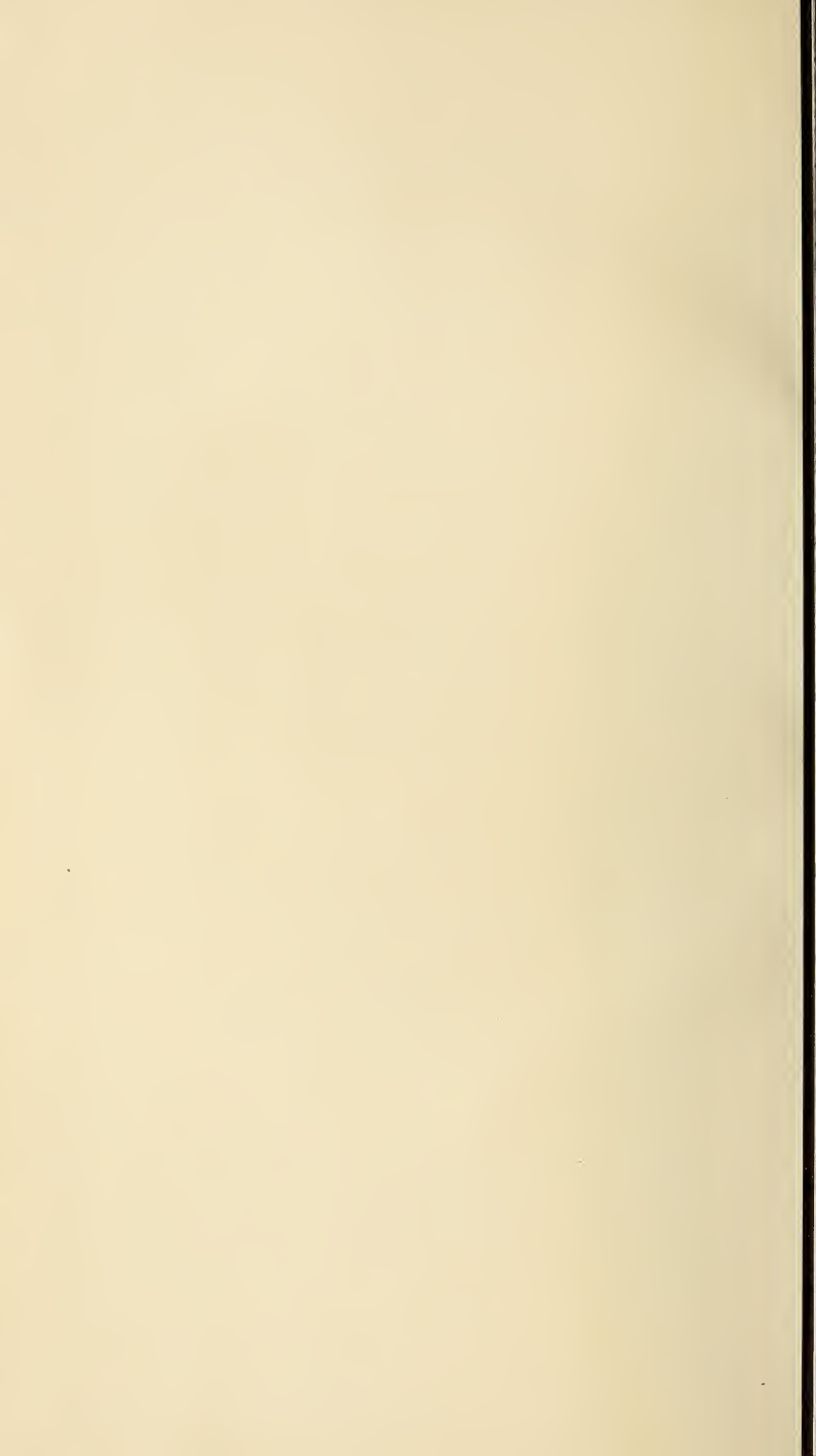




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SONG OF SONGS:

OR,

SACRED IDYLS.

TRANSLATED FROM

The Original Hebrew,

WITH NOTES

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY.

By JOHN MASON GOOD.

Bible English

'SALOMONIS SANCTISSIMUM CARMEN INTER IDYLLIA HEBREA RECENSENDUM
PUTO.'

Sir Wm. Jones.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR G. KEARSLEY, FLEET-STREET,

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P R E F A C E.

THE Song of Songs has hitherto been generally regarded as one continued and individual poem ;— either as an epithalamium (*οἰστρος nuptialis*), accompanied, in its recitation, with appropriate music ; or a regular drama, divisible, and at first clearly divided, into distinct acts or periods. Since the commentary of the learned and elegant Bossuet, bishop of Meath^{ux}, upon this admirable pastoral—and more especially since the confirmation of his ingenious conjecture, by that excellent critic the late bishop Lowth—the latter opinion has more generally prevailed ; and the poem has been arranged into seven parts ; one being appropriated to every day of the bridal week, or period of time allotted among the Hebrews for the celebration of the nuptial solemnity.

Great as are the authorities for both these speculations, I have ventured to deviate from them in the version now offered to the public. The Song of

Songs cannot be one connected epithalamium, since the transitions are too abrupt for the wildest flights of the oriental Muse, and evidently imply a variety of openings and conclusions; while, as a regular drama, it is deficient in almost every requisite that could give it such a classification: it has neither dramatic fable nor action, neither involution nor catastrophe; it is without a beginning, a middle, or an end. To call it such, is to injure it essentially; it is to raise expectations which can never be gratified, and to force parts upon parts which have no possible connexion. Bishop Lowth himself, indeed, while he contends that it is a drama, is compelled to contemplate it as an imperfect poem of this description *.

It is the object of the present version, therefore, to offer a new arrangement, and to regard the entire song as a collection of distinct idyls upon one common subject—and that, the loves of the Hebrew

* Id itaque satis tuto jam statuere licet, Canticum Salomonis ad minorem illam speciem dramaticæ poëseos pertinere, seu formam solummodo dramaticam habere; neutiquam justi dramaticis titulo insigniri posse. DE SACR. POES.

monarch and his fair bride: and it has afforded me peculiar pleasure to observe, from a passage I have accidentally met with in the writings^t of Sir William Jones, long since the composition of the present work, that some such opinion was entertained by this illustrious scholar *. In forming this arrangement, I have followed no other guide than what has appeared to me the obvious intention of the sacred bard himself: I have confined myself to soliloquy where the speaker gives no evident proofs of a companion, and I have introduced dialogue where the responses are obvious. I have finished the idyl where the subject seems naturally to close, and I have recommenced it where a new subject is introduced. Thus divided into a multitude of little detached poems, I trust that many of the obscurities which have hitherto overshadowed this unrivalled relique of the eastern pastoral have vanished completely, and that the ancient Hebrews will be found to possess a poet who, independently of the sublimity

* This passage I have readily selected as a motto to the title-page.

of any concealed and allegorical meaning, may rival the best productions of Theocritus, Bion, or Virgil, as to the literal beauties with which every verse overflows.

The author of these exquisite amoretts was king Soloman *; and they probably constitute a part of

* I trust the small deviation I have here, and throughout the volume, made from the common orthography of the last syllable of this name, will not be attributed to affectation. It would be a desirable acquisition at all times—but more especially at present, when a knowledge of oriental learning is advancing with rapid strides among us, that every proper name should be so delineated in the version to which it is committed, as equally to express its entire enunciation and original elements; and for want of an attention to so important a rule, it is surprising to observe how very differently the names of persons highly celebrated in Hindustanee, Persian, or Turkish history, are expressed in Roman characters, not only by translators of different European countries, but of the very same state and language; so as in many instances to render it almost impossible for the English reader to assimilate them. In the final syllable of the Hebrew שלמה it cannot, I think, be contended that the value of the ך is by any means fairly appreciated by the Roman *o*, either with regard to sound or character; and although we be not perhaps fully acquainted, notwithstanding all the diacritical attempts of the Massora, with the exact pronunciation of the ancient Hebrews, there can be no doubt that the ך is more justly represented by *a* or *e* than by *o*. In

the one thousand and five songs which his biographer asserts him to have composed *. Of the rest, unfortunately, we know nothing. The present fasciculus,

point of original element, the latter of these two might be preferable; but it is not sufficiently calculated in our own language to express the vocal value of the \aleph ; and, fortified by the example of the Arabians and Persians, who uniformly write (سليمان or سليمان) Sölman, or Söliman, I have preferred the former. As to the two prior vowels, from their total absence in the original, we are left at more liberty; and they have been consequently given very differently, both in different and the same languages, at different periods of time. Among the Asiatics, as I have just observed, they are both omitted, consistently indeed with the Hebrew text: but, as I have observed also, in rendering the Persian mode of spelling the name, we commonly to the present day make the first vowel an *o*, and the second an *i* or a *y*. In the Greek and Latin versions it is generally written Salomon: our first English translators, Tindal and Coverdale, adhered to the Latin orthography: and among the Germans, Italians, and almost every language of modern Europe excepting our own, it is continued to the present day. All however being arbitrary, and the modern use of the first and second *o* as correct as that of any other vowels, to have deviated in either of these instances would have been to have incurred the charge of affectation most justly.

* 1 Kings, iv. 32.

or collection, descends to us under the characteristic name of THE SONG OF SONGS, שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים, and was unquestionably therefore his favourite or happiest performance, the Hebrew language duplicating its terms to express superlative excellence. The Orientals, to the present moment, are accustomed to publish their lighter, and particularly their amatory, effusions, in distinct sets or diwans; each diwan consisting of an indefinite number of odes or gazels, arranged under every letter of the alphabet, and every verse of the gazel rhyming with the letter under which it is placed. The word diwan is, however, occasionally employed in a more relaxed sense, and applied to collections of poems, in which this rigid attention either to alphabetical arrangement or similarity of rhymes is not adhered to. Thus the diwan of Rafia consists of poems of almost every description, and comprises altogether not less than fifteen thousand distichs. Among the Hebrew bards, a system of the same kind appears occasionally to have prevailed. The five *alphabetical* psalms as they are called, consisting of the xxvth, xxxivth, xxxviith,

cxith, and cxixth, may be regarded as instances of the Hebrew diwan in its more strict and pertinent application; and the collection before us, as a diwan liberated from the bondage of alphabetical order, but maintaining a whole by the unity of its subject.

The Arabian poet, Teman, has happily compared the arrangement of beautiful thoughts in verse to a string of pearls prepared for the neck of a fine woman; and the Persian Anacreon, Hafiz, pursuing the same idea, asserts, in the last beit or stanza of one of his most exquisite gazels, that he has now ‘strung his pearls,’ and that they possess ‘the lustre and beauty of the stars *.’ This elegant conception is probably of Hebrew origin; for the word שִׁיר, in the present and most other instances, translated *song*, means, in its original acceptation, ‘a string or

* غزل گفتی و در سفتی نیا و خوش
 !خوان حافظ
 که بر نظم تو افشاند فلک عقد ثریارا

chain ;' it is precisely synonymous with the Greek *σειρα*, which the Rabbins write כִּירָה, and might have been employed to express those ornamental chains, or rather strings of pearls (نظم) which the enraptured monarch extols, in idyl I. 4, as adding to the beauty of this accomplished bride *. The different idyls presented in the collection before us were

* The Arabic term نظم is precisely synonymous, both in its literal and metaphorical sense, to the Hebrew שִׁיר: for in its former it implies a 'string' or 'chain of pearls,' and in its latter a verse or song. Both Persians and Arabians, indeed, are fond of applying some such fanciful imagery to their compositions, and especially to their poems. Thus the unrivalled Sadi has entitled one of his productions *ملبغات*, or 'Rays of Light;' and another *گلستان*, 'The Bed, or Bower of Roses:' while from the tender Jami we have received *سلسله الذهب*, 'The Chain of Gold,' a poem in three books, and *بهارستان*, 'The Mansion of the Spring:' the latter poem not widely different in appellation, though diametrically opposite in merit, to the *Λειμνωμαριον*, or 'Spiritual Meadow' of Sophronius.

therefore probably regarded by the sacred poet, at the time of their composition, as so many distinct beads or pearls, of which the whole, when strung together, constituted one perfect שׁוֹרֵק, string, catenation, or diwan; and, as before observed, on account of their supremacy of excellence above all the other diwans or poetic strings he had ever exhibited, he distinguished them by the illustrious appellation of ‘string of strings,’ ‘song of songs,’ or ‘diwan of diwans.’

Of the name of the fair bride in whose honour these amatory idyls were composed we are totally ignorant. By Dr. Lowth, Sir W. Jones, and many other eminent critics and scholars, she is thought to have been the royal daughter of Pharaoh; but the few circumstances that incidentally relate to her history, in these poetical effusions, completely oppose such an idea. The matrimonial connexion of the Hebrew monarch with the Egyptian princess was probably, indeed, a connexion of political interest alone; for we have no reason to conceive that it had been preceded by any personal intimacy or interchange of affection:

the offer was proposed by him on his first accession to the throne, prior to his having received from Jehovah the gift of superior wisdom ; at a time when, according to archbishop Usher *, he could not have been more than twenty years of age, when he was surrounded by a vast body of opponents and competitors, and when an alliance with the royal family of Egypt was likely to be of essential advantage to him : from which also, as a further proof of his political views in such an union, he received the city of Gezer as a dowry with the princess †—a city captured by Pharaoh from the Canaanites, and rased to the ground, probably from the obstinacy of its resistance ; but afterwards re-built by Solomon, and converted into a place of considerable distinction.

The matrimonial connexion here celebrated, on the contrary, appears to have proceeded from reciprocal affection alone ; and from the gentleness, modesty, and delicacy of mind, which are uniformly and perpetually attributed to this beautiful and ac-

* An. Mund. 2971—2991.

† 1 Kings, ix. 16,

complished fair one, she must have been well worthy of the royal love. Instead of being of Egyptian origin, she herself informs us that she was a native of Sharon *, which was a canton of Palestine. Though not of royal blood, she was of noble birth ; for she is addressed by her attendants under the appellation of princess † ; and though she could not augment by her dowry the dimensions of the national territory, she possessed for her marriage-portion a noble and fruitful estate in Baal-hammon ‡, ingeniously supposed by Mr. Harmer to have been situated in the delightful valley of Bocat, in the immediate vicinity of Balbec §, leased out to a variety of tenants, whose number we are not acquainted with, but every one of whom paid her a clear rental of a thousand shekels of silver, amounting to about 120*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* sterling. From the possession of this property it is natural to conceive that her father was deceased ; more especially as the house in which she resided is

* Sol. Song, ii. 1.

† Id. vii. 1.

‡ Sol. Song, viii. 12.

§ Outlines of a New Commentary, p. 35, 36.

repeatedly called the house of her mother *, as it was her mother who betrothed her to the enamoured monarch †, and as no notice of any kind is taken of the existence of her father. Dr. Hodgson conjectures that the name of her mother was Talmadni; for such is the interpretation he has given to a particular passage, which in general is translated very differently. I have stated the motives for this variation in note (5) on idyl X. but cannot accede to the criticism. She appears to have possessed two distinct families, and consequently to have had two marriages; for in idyl I. 21, the royal bride speaks of an offspring considerably older than herself, whom she denominates, not her father's, but her *mother's children*, who seem to have taken an undue advantage of her infancy, and to have behaved with great unkindness towards her. For these she no where expresses any degree of affection; but for an *own* brother and sister—the former an infant, and the

* Sol. Song, ch. iii. 4. viii. 2.

† Id. viii. 5.

latter considerably younger than herself—she evinces the tenderest regard of the most affectionate bosom*.

Of the age of this unrivalled beauty, at the time of her nuptials, we are no-where informed. Being in possession of an estate bequeathed her by her father, or some collateral relation, she must, at least, have acquired her majority according to the Hebrew ritual; yet, from the circumstance of her brother's being an unweaned infant, she could not have exceeded the prime of life; and from the exquisite delineations of her person, by her companions as well as by her lover, she must have been in the full flower of youth and beauty. As to the age of king Solomon, we may fairly calculate it, from collateral circumstances, to have been about twenty-five or twenty-six, and, consequently, that the nuptials were celebrated about the year 1010 before the birth of Christ. At the age of twenty he contracted his marriage of political interest with the Egyptian princess; and if he had not at this period complied with the

* Sol. Song, viii. 1. viii. 8.

luxurious fashion of his age, and opened his haram for the reception of the most beautiful women who could be found, and would consent to live with him, it is obvious that this establishment commenced very shortly afterwards. At the time of his union with the illustrious fair one celebrated in the poems before us, it consisted, as he himself informs us, of sixty queens or ladies who had brought dowries with them, and of eighty concubines or ladies who were devoid of patrimony *. In the latter part of his reign his seraglio became much more extensive and magnificent; for at one period it embraced not less than seven hundred queens and three hundred concubines †. Solomon was not an old man at his demise; for he could not exceed fifty-eight years of age, and consequently the thirty-eighth of his reign. If, then, in less than forty years he collected the vast establishment of seven hundred queens and three hundred concubines, we may fairly calculate that he was not more than five or six years in amassing the number

* Sol. Song, vi. 8.

† 1 Kings, xi. 3.

he possessed at the time he offered his addresses to the fair object of the Song of Songs, and, consequently, that he could not be more than about twenty-five or twenty-six.

How long his partiality for this accomplished bride continued we know not. The histories of his life, which would probably have given us some information upon the subject, and were composed by the prophets Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo *, have unfortunately followed the fate of all his own works, except the Book of Proverbs, of Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. The anonymous histories of him which are still preserved, however, in the sacred books of Kings and Chronicles, are minute and explicit in many points; and it is probable that the lady did not long live to enjoy his affection, or her name and some anecdotes relating to her would have been here communicated. That the Hebrew monarch conducted himself with great kindness towards her we may fairly conclude from the uniformity of his actions and the known generosity of his disposi-

* 2 Chron. ix. 29.

tion—a generosity that induced him, seven or eight years after his marriage with the daughter of Pharaoh, to build for this princess a superb palace, in splendor resembling his own, at a distance from the city of David *; and which tempted him, in direct disobedience to the divine will, to erect temples and altars for the use of all his queens and concubines, dedicated to the respective deities whom they idolatrously worshiped †.

These few detached and unsatisfactory anecdotes are the whole I have been able to collect of this beautiful and interesting personage. Imperfect as is the sketch, and obviously as much of it rests upon probability alone, the reader will perhaps receive it with complacency. It is a new attempt, and as such is entitled to candor.

It has been a question in all ages, whether the literal and obvious meaning of these sacred amoretts be the whole that was ever intended by the royal bard? or, whether they afford not at the same time the veil

* 1 Kings, iii. 1. vii. 8. ix. 24.—2 Chron. viii. 11.

† 1 Kings, xi. 4.

of a sublime and mystical allegory, delineating the bridal union subsisting between Jehovah and his pure and uncorrupted church? Upon this subject we have no sufficient data to build a decisive opinion. To those who disbelieve the existence of such an allegory, they still afford a happy example of the pleasures of holy and virtuous love; they inculcate, beyond the power of didactic poetry, the tenderness which the husband should manifest for his wife, and the deference, modesty, and fidelity, with which his affection should be returned;—and, considered even in this sense alone, they are fully entitled to the honor of constituting a part of the sacred scriptures.

For myself, nevertheless, I unite in the opinion of the illustrious Lowth, and believe such a sublime and mystic allegory to have been fully intended by the sacred bard. Regarded in this view, they afford an admirable picture of the Jewish and Christian churches; of Jehovah's selection of Israel as a peculiar people from the less fair and virtuous nations around them; of his fervent and permanent love for his elder church, so frequently compared by the Hebrew pro-

phets to that of a bridegroom for his bride ; of the beauty, fidelity, and submission of the church in return ; and of the call of the Gentiles into the pale of his favor, upon the introduction of CHRISTIANITY, so exquisitely typified under the character of a younger sister, destitute, in consequence of the greater simplicity of its worship, of those external and captivating attractions which made so prominent a part of the Jewish religion.

The Song of Songs is an oriental poem ; and this allegoric mode of describing the sacred union subsisting between mankind at large, or an individual and pious soul, and the 'great Creator, is common to almost all eastern poets from the earliest down to the present age. It is impossible, without such an esoteric interpretation, to understand many of the passages of the chaste and virtuous Sadi, or the more impassioned Hafiz ; and the Turkish commentators, Feridun, Sudi, and Seid Ali, following the example of the ancient Hushangis, have uniformly thus interpreted them, as they have also the writings of all the Sufi poets ; though in many instances they have

unquestionably pursued their *لسان غیب* (*Lisane Geib*), or mystic meaning, to an extravagant length. The Leili and Mejnùn of the Persians may be contemplated as the royal bridegroom and his beloved spouse of the Hebrews. The former have furnished a subject for a variety of the bards of Irán; and perhaps the loves of the latter were celebrated by other poets of his own æra than the royal bridegroom himself; although, from the lapse of time, and the dispersion of the people to whom they were addressed, not a vestige of such effusions be now remaining. But whether, in the instance before us, Soloman intended, or not, to introduce the mystic allegory here assumed, it is incontrovertible that precisely such an allegory exists in the *Mesnavi*, or poem upon the loves of the same illustrious personages Leili and Mejnùn, (*ليلى و مجنون*) by the elegant Nezami; who, as well as Hafiz, in the opinion of that chaste critic as well as profound scholar, sir William Jones, always appears to apply the name of Leili to the omnipresent spirit of God.

This emblematic mysticism in the bards of Irán

is quite as conspicuous in those of India; and the Vedantis, or Hindu commentators, have been as eager as the Sufis themselves to attribute such a double meaning to their compositions. Of all the poems of the east, by far the nearest in subject, style, and imagery, to the Songs of Solomon, are the Gitágovindá, or Songs of Jayadéva. The subject of the inimitable Jayadéva is the loves of Crishna and Rádhá, or the reciprocal attraction between the divine goodness and the human soul. His style, like that of the Hebrew bard, is in the highest degree flowery and amatory; his poem consists of distinct songs or idyls, (قصيدة) some of which are soliloquies, and others dialogues; but all of them, like the Song of Songs, confined to the same theme, and in some measure progressive in its history. They were originally set to music, and the different modes in which they were sung are still prefixed to each of them by the poet himself. This invaluable treasure however has long been lost; nor could the unwearied exertions of sir William Jones succeed in obtaining either in Nepal or Cashmir a

single copy with its appropriate melody. The *Gītāgovindā* comprises a part of the tenth book of the *Bhagavat*, and is exquisitely translated by sir William Jones, who has thrown all the different songs of which it consists into one entire piece,—a departure from the original, however, which I cannot but lament. The similitude between Soloman and Jayadēva is so close and perpetual, that I shall have more frequent occasion to refer to the latter in my explanatory notes upon the former than to any other eastern bard whatever; and in every citation I shall give the version of our excellent and illustrious countryman. If there be any foundation for the conception of Dr. Hodgson, that the Songs of Soloman were in the possession of Anacreon, who drew several of his best pictures and images from this overflowing source of beauty*; or in that of Dr. Lowth and other scholars, that they were still better known to Theocritus†, who seems also, as the reader will

* See note on idyl VII. (¹).

† *Existimaverunt viri eruditi, Theocritum poetam suavissimum, Septuaginta illis interpretibus, æqualem, et in aulā*

find in the appended notes, to have copied them neither unfrequently nor unsuccessfully—there is yet far more foundation, as it appears to me, for a belief that they were familiar to the mind of Jayadéva, and afforded the first hint of his Gitágovindá.

This exquisite poet flourished, it is said, antecedently to Calidas, the Shakespear of India; and consequently at least as early as the beginning of the last century before the Christian æra*; and was born, as he tells us himself, in Cenduli, which many believe to be Calinga: but since there is a town, observes sir William Jones, of a similar name in Berdwan, the natives of it insist that the finest lyric poet of India was their countryman, and celebrate in honor of him an annual jubilee, passing a whole night in representing his drama, and in singing his beautiful songs.

Ptolemæi Philadelphi una florentem, aliqua ex hoc carmine delibasse, et pene ad verbum expressa in sua Idyllia transtulisse.—*De Sacrá Poesi.*

* Calidas was contemporary with the public-spirited Vīcrarnáditya, who reigned in the period here referred to, and

We must not measure the taste or feelings of oriental writers by the standard of our own colder climate or more modern times. The language of Solomon, Jayadéva, or even Isaiah himself, to the more frigid critics of Europe, may frequently appear too warm and voluptuous for the purposes of the most ardent devotion; but it never could convey any improper idea to the people to whom it was immediately addressed. A strain of nearly equal fervor, and embellished with figures nearly as luxurious, has occasionally, however, been indulged in this northern hemisphere; and the mathematical Barrow, the logical Watts, and the ardent Mrs. Rowe, if they had been natives of Irán or India, instead of being natives of England, would have indulged in all the amatory, but pure and spiritual, enthusiasm of the Sufis or the Yogis.

patronized, in conjunction with the celebrated author of *Saccontala*, or the *Fatal Ring*, every poet, philosopher, or mathematician, who was possest of real merit. Of the splendid galaxy which surrounded his court, Calidas is, however, universally admitted to have been its more brilliant luminary.

No translator I have yet met with has nevertheless rendered the Song of Songs with all the delicacy of diction to which the original is fairly entitled. The chief error of all of them results from their having uniformly given verbal renderings of Hebrew terms and idioms, which ought merely to have been translated equivalently: a method by which any language in the world, when interpreted into another, may not only occasionally convey a meaning altogether different from what the author intended, but convert a term or phrase of perfect purity and delicacy in its original import, into one altogether indelicate and unchaste. This observation applies particularly to the organs of the human body; most of which independently of their literal sense, which is capable of univocal interpretation, have a metaphoric import that cannot be communicated by any literal version whatever. Thus among the Hebrews the *liver* (כִּבֶּר) as well as the *heart* was supposed to be the seat of love and delight; and in Psalm xvi. 9—"My *heart* is glad and my *glory* rejoiceth," as it occurs in our common version, is literally "My *heart* is glad

and my *liver* rejoiceth." Yet who could behold such an interpretation without a smile? or, who, if he were to behold it, would admit that the original was fairly translated? Among ourselves, in like manner, the *spleen* is supposed to be the region of disappointment and melancholy. But were a Jew to be told in his own tongue, that the inimitable Cowper had long labored under the *spleen*, he would be ignorant of the meaning of his interpreter; and, when at length informed of it, might justly tell him, that although he had literally rendered the words, he had by no means conveyed the idea; and, consequently, that he had travestied rather than translated. Thus again the ancient Hebrews used the term *navel* (שרר) in some such sense as we employ that of *loins* to describe the whole or the chief part of the *waist*: but, as, in our own language, they are never synonymous expressions, whenever the latter is intended by the former, instead of adopting the literal term *navel*, we should employ that of *waist* in its figurative meaning. What is the reader to understand by the following verse in its common accepta-

tion (Sol. Songs, vii. 2)—“*Thy NAVEL is like a round goblet which wanteth not liquor?*” None of our commentators, through inattention to this remark, have hitherto been able to explain it: and it has consequently fallen into the list of those phraseologies in this inimitable poem which a translator, to adopt the language of a modern interpreter—non *èspéra nitescere posse*. But exchanging the term *navel* for *waist*, to which the Hebrew substantive שרר equally applies as a synecdoche, and recalling to mind the exquisite elegance with which the ancients manufactured their vases, and the supreme blessing with which they regarded fertility, how obvious is the compliment of the royal bridegroom to his bride, as well as how delicate the language in which it is conveyed:

Thy *waist* is a well-turned goblet
Replete with the ‘luscious’ fluid.

But the Hebrew word שרר or שר, though in its stricter acceptation it imply the *navel*, is a term of far more refinement than its English synonym, as designa-

ting other ideas even independently of the *waist*; for it imports also *a coil, a cord, a string, a musical string*; and hence a *song* or *canticle*, in which sense it is employed by Soloman himself as the title of the very poem before us.

There are lights and shades in all languages, as well as in all landscapes; and the translator who has taste enough to seize and apply them will never suffer an indelicacy which does not exist in his original to enter into his copy. I have here enumerated but one example of ideas incorrectly transfused into our common versions: the reader will find many others pointed out in the progress of the appended notes. He will see that the term *belly* should in one or two instances have been rendered *bosom*; that in others it is used synecdochally for the *frame* at large; and, consequently, that this latter term must convey a more precise translation of it, because it best preserves the delicacy of the original. The word *thigh* is by a similar figure occasionally employed for *limb* in general: and in every such case is better exchanged for it, though in the Hebrew it is a term

sufficiently select. In like manner the Arabic چوکان, which literally imports an *arched club*, and is metaphorically applied by the poets to the *eyebrow* of the fair from its supposed destructive power, is in reality more strictly rendered into English in its metaphoric sense, *arched brow*, than in its literal *arched club*. So also the term شکر لب *sugar-lipped*, which, with ourselves, conveys a ludicrous idea, is more fairly rendered *sweet-lipped*, as a general phrase, or *honey-lipped*, as an equivalent metaphor.

The Song of Songs is therefore a portion of real history, conveying a spiritual allegory, and communicated in diction highly delicate and refined. Be the original intention of this exquisite poem however what it may, the present attempt cannot, I am induced to hope, be objected to by any one. It is with an allegory as with an apologue: before it be applied, it is necessary that we understand the author's phraseology and metaphors,—in reality, the whole of his exoteric and literal meaning; and when this is once accomplished, the application

will acquire a double force, and afford a double degree of instruction. There are many passages in the Song of Songs, independently of those already noticed, which have hitherto eluded the powers of the most sedulous commentators to illustrate, and many to which, perhaps, a wrong interpretation has been annexed. How far the present version may succeed in remedying these defects, in correcting error, and elucidating obscurity, must be left for the reader to determine. Such however is its object; and, to attain it, the author has not only studiously investigated the original himself, but has endeavoured to avail himself of the labors of prior critics and translators, so far as they seem to have been fortunate in their respective branches. Something he will be found to have drawn from the annotations of Patrick and Houbigant; much from the Prelections of Dr. Lowth: the laborious researches of Dr. Kennicott have assisted him largely; and Michaëlis and Harmer have been occasionally consulted with success. In the prose version he has attended to the metrical arrangement of the original, such at

least as it has appeared to himself after a careful perusal. In this, however, he does not pretend to follow the system of the very ingenious but fanciful bishop Hare, nor any other mode of metre which has hitherto been conjectured: for, even allowing a metrical arrangement on the first publication of the original, its division is at present rather a matter of taste than of precept. The German critics have differed from the English, and the English from one another.

It becomes the author still further to state, that Mr. Green and Dr. Hodgson have been of very essential service to him; but that his greatest obligations are due to the anonymous writer of "The Song of Solomon, newly translated from the original Hebrew, with a Commentary and Annotations;" published by Dodsley in 1764, which he has just learnt is the work of Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore. Mrs. Francis's version is also an elegant performance, and many of her notes are beautifully illustrative; but, as being a dramatic paraphrase, it differs widely from the version now presented,

pertinacious adherence to the original Hebrew, and, as far as may be, to the language of the Bible translation.

Of the very elegant, though not very modern, Spanish version of Luis de Leon, who is reported to have suffered for his translation five years' imprisonment in one of the dungeons of the Inquisition, I have not, after a wide research, been able to obtain a copy. While correcting the press, I have been favored by Mr. Tooke, of Great Ormond Street, with the elegant Latin version of Duport, which I find to be a transcript, with scarcely a single exception, from the standard English Bible, only that the translator has divided it into a variety of odes, of different measures, of which the principal are Sapphic and Iambic. I have occasionally referred to it as I have proceeded. —I have also received a copy of Dr. Croxall's *Fair Circassian*, which, notwithstanding the general beauty of the versification, I shall dismiss without further notice, than that, if the author had critically consulted the original, he would have found that his plan departs with an equal degree of licentiousness from


the history, the morality, and language of the entire poem.—To Mr. Henley I am obliged for a copy of the Italian version of Melesigenio, printed at Parma; and have to regret that I did not receive it earlier. The arrangement of Melesigenio is different, as well from the present as from any prior attempt that has fallen into my hands. It is very nearly, however, the arrangement which would have been adopted by Dr. Geddes—as he has repeatedly explained his plan to me—had he lived to have completed this part of his intended labors. Melesigenio conceives the entire book to consist, not of distinct idyls, but of distinct songs; and these not confined to one and the same bride and bridegroom, but extending to different personages, and all of them ideal. He nevertheless believes the whole book to be allegoric; in which, to adopt his own language, ‘one thing is said and another is intended;’ that it is designed to represent the mystical union of Jesus Christ with his Church, or with every individual soul who composes a part of it; and especially, adds the devout bard, with that of

the *most holy Mary*, inasmuch as she exceeds all others in excellence and purity*.

Such is the doctrine of the modern Italian translator, and such his plan. As to the former, I shall suffer him to enjoy it without any opposition on my part: with respect however to the latter, I shall take the liberty of observing, that as the different iterations and intercalary verses introduced clearly bespeak an unity of design in the construction of the whole book or fasciculus, so the similarity of form and mental qualities under which the bride and bridegroom are at all times represented evidently prove them to be one and the same pair. The versification is nevertheless spirited and elegant, though in many instances far too paraphrastic for an interpretation that pretends to be literal. The reader will find it occasionally referred to in the latter part of the notes.

* Egli è tutto allegorico; ove una cosa dicesi ed un'altra si vuole significare. Sotto l'ombra di amori e di nozze ora d'un pastore, or d'un re vi si celebra la mistica unione di G. C. colla sua Chiesa, e pero con ciascun' anima fedele, che la Chiesa compone, e tanto più particolarmente con quella dia Maria santissima, quanto ella in ogni pregio supera tutte l'altre.

To these sources of assistance I have also to add the name of my highly valued friend, the late Dr. Geddes, to whom I communicated my undertaking a few weeks prior to his decease, and from whom I received some manuscript observations and criticisms, which have been, as every reader will suppose they must, of eminent advantage to me. Had the life of this profound scholar and indefatigable critic been prolonged, the attempt now offered would have been less imperfect; and had his own biblical labors extended to this part of the Scriptures, he would be found, as I have already observed, to have supported an arrangement of the Song of Songs—if not, like the present, in distinct and unconnected idyls,—yet not widely different from such a plan; although he would not have united with me in allowing it to possess an esoteric and allegoric meaning. The pursuit of truth, however, was his grand and habitual object; and as no man was more resolute in claiming the right of private judgment for himself, so no man was more ready to allow the same privilege to others.



SONG OF SONGS;

OR,

SACRED IDYLS.

SONG OF SONGS;

The Numerals and Figures in the Margin denote the Chapter and Verse of the Bible Translation.

IDYL I.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- Ch. I. 2 LET him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth;
For thy love is delicious above wine.
- 3 Like the fragrance of thy own sweet perfumes
Is thy name—a perfume poured forth;
For this reason do the virgins love thee.
- 4 ‘ Still thus ’ attract me—we would follow ‘ thy perfumes.’—
The king hath led me into his apartments.

Or, SACRED IDYLS.

The interlineary Figures mark the Number of the Notes at the
End of the Volume.

IDYL I.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS.

ROYAL BRIDE.

O LET him kiss me with those lips of bliss!
For more than nectar¹ dwells in every kiss.
Rich thy perfumes; but richer far than they
The countless charms that round thy person play:
Thy name alone, more fragrant than the rose,
Glads every maid, where'er its fragrance flows.
Still let it draw me!—with attraction sweet
Still sway our hearts, and guide our willing feet!—
Daughters of Salem! tell through every grove,
The partial monarch crowns me with his love.

VIRGINS.

We will exult in thee and rejoice :
 Thy love will we celebrate above wine;
 Thou art every way lovely.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 5 Brown am I, but comely, O ye daughters of Jerusalem!
 As the tents of Kedar, as the tapestries of Soloman.
- 6 'Yet' despise me not because I am brown,
 For the sun hath discoloured me.
 My mother's children were severe with me;
 They made me keeper of the vineyards.
 My own vineyard have I not kept.
- 7 Tell me, O thou! whom my soul loveth,
 Where thou feedest 'thy flock,'
 Where thou leadest it to rest at noon.
 For why should I be as a wanderer
 Among the flocks of thy companions?

VIRGINS.

We share thy bliss—and, with triumphant voice,
 More than o'er wine,² o'er costliest wine, rejoice.
 Fair is thy form, well worthy of its lot,
 O matchless excellence! and void of spot!³

ROYAL BRIDE.

Not such, ye maids of Salem, my renown;
 My form is comely, but my face is brown:⁴
 Comely as tapestry⁵ where the king frequents,
 But brown as Kedar's tawny-tinctur'd tents.
 Yet scorn me not⁶ though thus of humbler hue,—
 'Twas from the sun the sultry tint I drew.
 My mother's children,⁷ with unkind commands,
 In servile toils employed my infant hands:
 I kept their vineyards⁸ through the blazing day,
 And hence my own unprun'd and desert lay.—
 Tell me, O thou! for whom my spirit pines,
 Where now beneath the noon thy flock reclines?⁹
 There let me seek thee:—for, devoid of home,
 Why mid the flocks of strangers should I roam?

VIRGINS.

8 If thou know not, O thou fairest among women !
Go forth in the footsteps of the flock;
And leave thy kids to feed
Beside the tents of the shepherds.

VIRGINS.

If, O thou fairest of the female race!

His devious flock thou know not where to trace,

Go—mark their footsteps—follow where they guide,

And leave thy kids the shepherds' tents beside.¹⁰

IDYL II.

KING SOLOMAN, ROYAL BRIDE.

KING SOLOMAN.

Ch. I. 9 I COMPARE thee, O my beloved !

To one of the steeds in Pharaoh's chariot.

10 How beautiful are thy brows with rows of jewels!

Thy neck with strings of pearls!

11 ' Yet' rows of gold will we make for thee,

With studs of silver.

ROYAL BRIDE.

12 While the king sitteth at his banquet

My spikenard shall diffuse its fragrance.

13 A casket of myrrh is my beloved unto me;

He shall lie all night in my bosom.

14 A cluster of cypress-flowers is my beloved unto me,

From the vineyards of En-gedi.

IDYL II.

KING SOLOMAN, ROYAL BRIDE.

KING SOLOMAN.

To what, my love ! thy form shall I compare,
 But the famed steed in Pharaoh's splendid car ?¹—
 How rich thy brows with radiant jewels bound !
 How white thy neck that strings of pearls surround !²
 Yet shall new ornaments their powers combine,
 And rows of gold with studs of silver shine.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Decked by the king, I'll glory in my bloom,
 And at his banquet³ shed each choice perfume.
 A casque of myrrh,⁴ a cluster from the flowers
 That grace the cypress in En-gedi's bowers⁵—
 Such is my love : and, till the shadows fly,
 Warm in my bosom nightly shall he lie.

KING SOLOMAN.

- 15 Behold ! how beautiful art thou, O my love !
 Behold ! how beautiful !—thine eyes are ‘ the eyes’ of
 doves.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 16 Behold ! how delightful art thou, O my beloved !—
 And how pleasant, how green, is our flowery couch !
 17 The beams of our house are cedars,
 Our roof is of firs.
 Ch. II. 1 ‘ But’ I am a ‘ mere’ rose of ‘ the fields of’ Sharon,
 A lily of the valleys.

KING SOLOMAN.

- 2 As the lily among thorns
 So is my beloved among the damsels.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 3 As the citron-tree among the trees of the wood
 So is my beloved among the youths :
 Under his shade I languished, and sat down,
 And his fruit was delicious to my palate.
 4 O bear me into the house of delight !
 Spread the banner of love over me !

KING SOLOMAN.

How fair thy form, my love ! how wondrous fair !
 Doves' are thine eyes,⁶ might doves' with such compare.

ROYAL BRIDE.

How dear to me the tongue such praise that speaks !
 How sweet the bower that my beloved seeks !
 This flowery couch !—these fir, these cedar-beams !
 This leafy roof,⁷ through which the sun scarce gleams ;
 Yet in thy praise must Sharon's daughter fail,
 A mere wild rose,⁸ a lily of the vale.

KING SOLOMAN.

As mid the thorns the lily, mid the fair
 So looks my love, so shines beyond compare.⁹

ROYAL BRIDE.

As, mid the trees, its head the citron rears,¹⁰
 So my beloved mid his train appears.
 For him I sighed¹¹ with many a pang acute,
 Sat in his shade, and feasted on his fruit.—
 O bear me¹² to thy house of bliss,¹³ and spread
 New proofs of love, new signals o'er my head !

- 5 Cheer me with cordials,
Support me with citrons,
For I 'yet' languish with love.—
- 6 'Already' his left hand is under my head,
And his right hand embraceth me.
- 7 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem !
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not, nor awake
My beloved until he please.

Cheer me with cordials !¹⁴ from the citron grove
Bring, bring me fruits, for I am faint with love.—
Already in his blest embrace I breathe,¹⁵
His right hand o'er me, and his left beneath.
Daughters of Salem born ! by all ye prize,
The graceful hind, the roe with luscious eyes,¹⁶
I charge you stir not—hushed be every breeze,
Watch o'er my love, nor wake him¹⁷ till he please.

IDYL III.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Ch. II. 8 'TWAS' the voice of my beloved.—

Behold he came leaping over the mountains,
Bounding over the hills!

9 My beloved resembled a roe or a young hart.

Behold! he stood without our wall;
He looked 'in' through the windows;
He showed himself through the lattice.

10 My beloved spake, and said unto me

" Arise, my love! my fair one! and come away.

11 " For, lo! the winter is past;

" The rain is over, is gone;

12 " The flowers appear on the earth;

" The season of the song is returned,

" And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.

13 " The fig-tree sweeteneth her green figs,

" And the tender grapes of the vine yield a fragrance.—

" Arise, my love! my fair one! and come away.

14 " O my dove! through the clefts of the rocks,

" From the fastnesses of the precipices,

" Let me see thy countenance,

IDYL III.

ROYAL BRIDE.

'Twas my beloved's voice.—With rapture new,
Light as a hart, o'er heights and hills he flew.¹

Lo ! through the window, through the lattice green,²
Hard by the door, right early was he seen.

“ Arise, my love ! ” 'twas thus I heard him say,

“ Arise, my love ! my fair one, come away !

“ Gone is the winter, and the rains are o'er,

“ And the fresh fields their yearly blossoms pour ;

“ The birds their songs resume³ through every grove,

“ The glossy turtle⁴ wakes his voice to love ;

“ Her figs the fig-tree sweetens,⁵—o'er the vine,

“ Fragrant and fresh, the lucid clusters shine,⁶—

“ Woods, hills, and valleys, all their charms display,

“ Arise, my love ! my fair one, come away.

“ O ! from thy clefts, thy fastnesses appear ;

“ Here bend thy voice, my dove !⁷ thy visage here :

“ Let me hear thy voice ;

“ For sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance lovely.—

15 “ And ye, ‘ my companions !’ catch for us the foxes,

“ The little foxes that spoil the vines,

“ For our vines have tender grapes.”—

16 My beloved is mine, and I am his :

He feedeth among the lilies.

17 Till the day breathe, and the shades flee away,

Return ‘ to me,’ O my love !

And be thou like a roe, or a young hart

On the mountains of Bether.

" Look through the lattice, bid my heart rejoice,
 " For dear to me thy visage, and thy voice.—
 " And you, companions ! haste—the way prepare,—
 " Root out the foxes⁸ from each felon lair ;
 " Save the young vines, the vineyards, from their spoil,
 " And to my love present a fertile soil."

I am my love's, and my beloved mine :
 The sweets of lilies on his lips combine ;⁹
 Till breathe the morning,¹⁰ and the shadows fly,
 Blest in my beating bosom shall he lie.
 Return ! return ! let eve thy love bestow !
 Haste as, o'er Bether's hill, the bounding roe !

IDYL IV.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- Ch. III. 1 ON my bed, in the night
 I sought him whom my soul loveth.
 I sought him, but I found him not.
- 2 I arose, and went about the city ;
 In the streets, and in the broad-ways,
 I sought him whom my soul loveth :
 I sought him, but I found him not.
- 3 The watchmen of the city beheld me :—
 “ Saw ye,” said I, “ him whom my soul loveth ? ”
- 4 But a little had I passed from them
 When I found him whom my soul loveth,
 I held him, and would not let him go
 Till I had brought him into my mother’s house,
 Into the dwelling of her who conceived me.
- 5 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem !
 By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
 That ye stir not—nor awake
 My beloved until he please.

IDYL IV.

ROYAL BRIDE.

'T WAS in the night: my head the pillow pressed,
 And anxious dreams¹ disturbed my throbbing breast;
 I sought the darling object of my pain;
 Intent I sought him—but I sought in vain.²
 Abrupt I rose, in hopes my love to meet;
 Wide through the city, wearying every street,
 I sought the darling object of my pain;
 Intent I sought him—but I sought in vain.
 The midnight watchmen found me as I strayed;
 Of them I sought, with spirit deep dismayed,
 "Saw ye the darling object of my pain?"
 Of them I sought him—but I sought in vain.—
 Not long I left them, ere, with rapture crowned,
 The darling object of my pain I found.
 I held him firm, forbade him more to roam,
 And instant brought him to my mother's home.
 Daughters of Salem born!—by all ye prize,³
 The graceful hind, the roe with luscious eyes,
 I charge you stir not—hushed be every breeze,
 Watch o'er my love, nor wake him till he please.

IDYL V.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS,
KING SOLOMAN (afterwards).

SCENE—*A Chiosk or Pavilion.*

VIRGINS.

Ch. III. 6 **W**HAT is this coming forth from the wilderness
Like columns of smoke, perfumed with myrrh,
With frankincense, and all the powders of the merchant?

OTHER VIRGINS.

- 7 Behold ! it is the palanquin of Soloman :
Threescore valiant men are about it,
Of the valiant of Israel.
- 8 They all bear swords, being expert in war ;
Each hath his sword upon his thigh
Against the peril of the night.
- 9 King Soloman hath made for himself
‘ This bridal ’ couch of the wood of Lebanon ;

IDYL V.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS,
KING SOLOMAN (afterwards).

SCENE—*A Chiosk or Pavilion in the Royal Pleasure-
Grounds.*

VIRGINS.

Lo! what is this,¹ in clouds of fragrant gums,²
That from the wilderness³ so stately comes?
Already frankincense in columns pours,
And all Arabia breathes from all her stores.

OTHER VIRGINS.

Behold the couch⁴ for Soloman prepared!
Full threescore valiant soldiers form its guard,
Valiant of valiant sires!—in war expert,
Each, o'er his thigh, with tempered sword begirt.⁵
Its frame is cedar—Lebanon supplies
The bridal treasure from his balmy skies;

- 10 Its pillars hath he formed of silver,
 Its inside of gold, its hangings of purple;
 Its covering is paved 'with needle-work'
 By his best-beloved among the daughters of Jerusalem.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 11 Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion!
 And behold king Solomon,
 With the crown with which his mother crowned him
 On the day of his espousals,
 On the day of the gladness of his heart.

KING SOLOMAN (*introduced*).

- Ch. IV. 1 Behold! thou art fair, my love! behold, thou art fair!
 Thine eyes are as 'the eyes of' doves beneath thy locks;
 Thy hair is as a flock of goats
 That browse about Mount Gilead.
- 2 Thy teeth are like the shorn flock
 Which come up from the washing-pool,
 All of which have twins,
 And none is bereaved among them.

Silver the columns, the wrought roof is gold,
 Rich, purple hangings all the couch enfold;
 And o'er the down⁶ a broïdered vest is thrown
 Worked by the fair⁷ the monarch loves alone.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Go forth, O maids of Zion heavenly blest!
 Behold king Solomon in glory drest;
 Crowned with the crown which, o'er the royal spouse,⁸
 His mother fixed amid his bridal vows,
 When all his heart was gladness, and the land
 Rung with the princely presents of his hand!

KING SOLOMAN (*introduced by attendant Virgins*).

How fair thy form, my love! how wondrous fair!
 Doves' are thine eyes beneath thy shadowy hair.⁹
 Fine as the goats of Gilead are thy locks;¹⁰
 Thy snowy teeth surpass the purest flocks,
 Less white, less even when, in twins they bound
 Fresh from the flood, and each his mate has found.¹¹

- 3 Thy lips are like a brede of scarlet,
And thy speech is delicious.
As the blossom of the pomegranate,
So are thy cheeks beneath thy locks.
- 4 Thy neck is like the tower of David
Constructed for an armoury :
A thousand shields are hung up against it,
All bucklers of the mighty.
- 5 Thy two breasts are like two young fawns,
Twins of the roe, and feeding among lilies.
- 6 Till the day breathe and the shades flee away
I will betake me to ' this ' mountain of myrrh,
To ' this ' hill of frankincense.
- 7 Thou art all beautiful, my love !
There is no defect in thee.

Thy lips are ruby silk¹² implicit wove,
 Thy honied speech all blandishment and love.
 Beneath thy fragrant tresses, as they flow,¹³
 O'er thy fair cheeks pomegranate blossoms blow.¹⁴
 Thy polished neck, with brilliant jewels graced,
 Gleams like the tower of David o'er the waste,¹⁵
 Hung with a thousand shields in bright array,
 Trophies of heroes famed for warlike sway.
 Thy swelling bosom offers to the sight
 Twin hills of lilies exquisitely white ;
 Hills o'er whose beds of aromatic snows
 Peep, clad in dun, two young and timid roes.¹⁶
 Till breathe the morning and the shadows fly,
 Blest o'er these balmy mountains will I lie.¹⁷
 Look where I may, my love ! thy beauteous frame
 Is spotless all—a finish free from blame.¹⁸

IDYL VI.

KING SOLOMAN, ROYAL BRIDE.

KING SOLOMAN.

Ch. IV. 8 COME to me from Lebanon, my spouse !

‘ Come ’ to me from Lebanon.

Look from the height of Amana,

From the top of Shenir, and Hermon,

From the dwellings of the lions,

From the mountains of the panthers.

9 Thou hast ravished my heart, O my sister ! my spouse !

Thou hast ravished my heart at once with thine eyes,

At once with the turn of thy neck.

10 How sweet is thy love, my sister ! my spouse !

Thy love how more delicious than wine,

And the fragrance of thy perfumes than all spices !

11 Thy lips, O my spouse ! drop as the honey-comb ;

Honey and milk are under thy tongue,

IDYL VI.

KING SOLOMAN, ROYAL BRIDE.

KING SOLOMAN.

LET dreams or dangers menace as they may,¹
 Still shall these arms, my love ! the tempest stay.
 Look down from Amana, from Shenir's height,
 Where savage howls disturb the drowsy night ;
 From tangled Lebanon, from Hermon come,
 From pards, from lions—here behold thy home.
 My heart is thine, my sister-spouse !² my dove !
 My panting heart is ravished by thy love !
 Thine eye but glances,³ and my spirit burns ;
 Thy graceful neck subdues me as it turns.⁴
 How dear to me the thought that thou art mine !
 How more delicious than the choicest wine !
 How sweet thy fragrance ; to my soul that yields
 A balm beyond the spices of the fields.
 Thy lips with dropping honey-combs are hung,⁵
 Milk, milk and honey⁶ dwell beneath thy tongue ;

And the odor of thy garments is as the odor of Lebanon.

- 12 A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse,
A spring shut up, a fountain sealed.
- 13 A paradise of pomegranates are thy productions,
Of delicious fruits, cypress, and spikenard,
- 14 Spikenard, and saffron, calamus, and cinnamon,
With all trees of frankincense,
Myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices :—
- 15 O thou fountain of gardens ! thou well of living waters !
Thou river of Lebanon !

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 16 Awake, O North-wind ! and come, thou South !
Blow upon my garden, that its spices may flow out ;
That my beloved may enter into his garden,
And eat its most delicious fruits.

And Lebanon,⁷ in luscious odors drest,
 Pours all his incense o'er thy bridal vest.
 My bride ! my love ! in thee perfection meets ;
 A garden art thou, filled with matchless sweets ;
 A garden walled, those matchless sweets to shield ;
 A spring inclosed, a fountain fresh and sealed ;⁸
 A paradise of plants⁹—where all unite,
 Dear to the smell, the palate, or the sight :
 Of rich pomegranates, that at random blow ;
 Cypress and nard,¹⁰ in fragrant gales that flow ;
 Nard, saffron, cinnamon, the dulcet airs,¹¹
 Deep through its canes, the calamus prepares ;
 The scented aloes,¹² and each shrub that showers¹³
 Gums from its veins, and spices from its flowers ;—
 O pride of gardens ! fount of endless sweets !¹⁴
 Well-spring of all in Lebanon that meets !

ROYAL BRIDE.

Awake, O North-wind ! come, thou Southern breeze !¹⁵
 Blow on my garden, and refresh its trees ;
 That my beloved through its bowers may roam,¹⁶
 Feast on its fruits, and here elect his home.

KING SOLOMAN.

Ch. II. 8 I am come into my garden, my sister ! my spouse !

I gather my myrrh with my spice :

I eat my honey-comb with my honey ;

I drink my wine with my milk.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Eat, O my friend ! drink,

Yea, drink abundantly, O my beloved !

KING SOLOMAN.

Into thy garden am I come, my love !
And gather balsams from each spicy grove :
On milk I banquet, on the honied comb,¹⁷
Rills of rich wine, and here I fix my home.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Eat, O my friend ! O drink with ample draught,
Deep be the bowl by my beloved quaffed.

IDYL VII.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS,
KING SOLOMAN (afterwards).

ROYAL BRIDE.

Ch. IV. 2 I was sleeping but my heart was awake.

Lo! the voice of my beloved who was knocking 'at
my door.'

"Open to me, my sister! my love!

"My dove! my undefiled!

"For my head is filled with dew,

"My locks with the drops of the night."

3 "I have put off my vest—

"How shall I put it on?

"I have washed my feet—

"How shall I defile them?"

4 My beloved put in his hand through the door-hole,
And my bowels were moved for him.

5 I arose to open to my beloved,
And my hands dropped with myrrh.

IDYL VII.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS,
KING SOLOMAN (afterwards).

ROYAL BRIDE.

ASLEEP I lay, but fancy was awake.¹

Lo ! my beloved's voice, and thus he spake :

“ Unbar thy door, my undefiled !² my dove !

“ Unbar, my sister ! and admit thy love :

“ Wet are my locks beneath the chilly dews,

“ Steeped in the vapours hoary midnight brews.”

“ My feet are washed, myself throughout undrest ;

“ How may I soil me ? how resume my vest ?”

I saw his fingers thrust within the door,³

Moved was my heart, and could resist no more.

Swift, my beloved to receive, I flew ;

Swift, and the vase of fragrant myrrh o'erthrew ;⁴

And my fingers with fragrant myrrh,

Upon the handles of the bolt.

6 I opened to my beloved ;

But my beloved had turned away, and was gone :—

My soul failed at ‘ the remembrance of ’ his words.

I sought him—but I could not find him ;

I called him—but he gave me no answer.

7 The watchmen, who go about the city, found me ;

They smote me, they wounded me ;

The keepers of the walls stripped me of my veil.

8 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem !

If ye find my beloved—

What should ye tell him,

But that I languish with love ?

VIRGINS.

9 What is thy beloved more than another’s beloved ?

What more than another’s beloved, O thou fairest among
women !

That thou thus chargest us ?

The vase I fondly for him had prepared,
 Of fragrant myrrh, and balmy-breathing nard ;
 Th' ethereal odor from my hands distilled,
 Dropped o'er the bolt,⁵ and all the chamber filled.
 The door I opened—but my love was fled ;
 His words I weighed, and sunk with inward dread.
 I sought, I called him—but in vain I tried ;
 His steps I traced not, and no voice replied.
 The midnight watchmen marked my wandering feet,
 Smote me severe, and drove me from the street ;
 The keepers of the wall, with rude assail,
 Exposed my face, and stripped me of its veil.⁶

Daughters of Salem !⁷ should ye, as ye wind
 Your flowery path-way, my beloved find,
 Tell him, I charge you—tell him, as ye rove —
 What can ye say, but that I faint with love ?⁸

VIRGINS.

What, O thou fair one ! fairest ! beauteous-most !
 Does thy beloved o'er another's boast ?
 What thy beloved, that, with accents sweet,
 Thou thus shouldst charge us, if thy love we meet ?

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 10 My beloved is white and ruddy,
The chief among ten thousand.
- 11 His head is of the finest gold :
Curling are his locks, and black as a raven ;
- 12 His eyes are those of doves washed with milk,
Sitting cheerfully by the rivers of water ;
- 13 His cheeks are beds of sweetly-budding spices ;
His lips ' ruby'-lilies dropping liquid myrrh ;
- 14 His hands rings of gold, beset with the beryl ;
His body polished ivory, inlaid with sapphires ;
- 15 His legs pillars of marble,
Founded upon pedestals of fine gold.
His countenance is as Lebanon,
Majestic as the cedars ;
- 16 His mouth is sweetness itself ;
Yea, every part of him is lovely.
Such is my beloved, such my friend,
O daughters of Jerusalem !

ROYAL BRIDE.

Fair is my love, all ruddy, white, and fair,
Chief of ten thousand,⁹ each beyond compare.
Of noblest mold his head ;¹⁰ his tresses round
Black as a raven,¹¹ curling, and unbound ;
His eyes the milk-white dove's, that gaily beam
Near the full fountain,¹² moistened with its stream.
Rich beds of sprouting spices are his cheeks ;¹³
His vermeil lips drop odors as he speaks—
His lips of ruby-lily ;¹⁴ and his voice
Fragrant as myrrh,¹⁵ that bids the waste rejoice.
Smooth are his hands, translucent to behold,
As the clear beryl set in purest gold ;
While, through the polished ivory of his skin,¹⁶
Peep, as they stray, the sapphire veins within.
Firm are the sinewy limbs his sandals brace
As marble pillars¹⁷ on a golden vase :¹⁸
His look is Lebanon's majestic grove ;
His mouth is sweetness—every part is love.
Daughters of Salem ! such, till life shall end,
Such my beloved, such my bosom friend.

VIRGINS.

- Ch. VI. 1 Whither is thy beloved gone,
 O thou fairest among women?
 Whither is thy beloved turned aside,
 That we may seek him with thee?

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 2 My beloved went down into his garden
 To his beds of aromatics,
 To feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.—
 3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine;
 He feedeth among the lilies.

KING SOLOMAN (*meeting them*).

- 4 Graceful art thou, O my love! as Tirza,
 Beautiful as Jerusalem,
 Dazzling as 'an army' with 'waving' banners.
 5 Turn away thine eyes from me,
 For they have overcome me.
 Thy hair is as a flock of goats
 That browse about Mount Gilead;
 6 Thy teeth as a flock of sheep,
 Which come up from the washing-pool,

VIRGINS.

But whither roams he? say, unrivalled fair,
Where roams thy love? come, let us seek him there.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Down to the gardens, where the spices bloom,
With airy feet did my beloved roam,
To feed on fragrance, and with lavish hand
Pluck the young lilies,¹⁹ where their snows expand.—
I am my love's, and my beloved mine:
The sweets of lilies on his lips combine.

KING SOLOMAN (*meeting them*).

Beauteous as Salem art thou,²⁰ O my love!
Graceful as Tirza's undulating grove;²¹
Dazzling as armies, that, in bright array,²²
Gleam o'er the mountains, and reflect the day,²³
Turn, turn thee from me, turn those radiant eyes:²⁴
I feel their power, and all my vigor dies.
Fine as the goats of Gilead are thy locks;²⁵
Thy snowy teeth surpass the purest flocks;

- All of which have twins,
 And none is bereaved among them,
 7 As the blossom of the pomegranate
 So are thy cheeks beneath thy locks.
 8 ' In my palace' are threescore queens
 And fourscore concubines,
 And virgins without number :
 9 ' But' my dove, my undefiled, is ' mine' alone ;
 She—the delight of her mother,
 The darling of her who bare her.
 The damsels beheld her, and blessed her,
 The queens and the concubines—and thus extolled her :
 10 " Who is she that looketh forth as the morning,
 " Fair as the moon, bright as the sun,
 " And dazzling as ' all ' the ' starry ' hosts ?"

Less white, less even when, in twins, they bound
Fresh from the flood, and each his mate has found.

Beneath thy shadowy tresses, as they flow, ²⁶

O'er thy fair cheeks pomegranate blossoms blow.

Let queens and concubines surround the throne, ²⁷

My dove, my undefiled, is mine alone : ²⁸

My dove—her mother's sole delight on earth,

The darling joy of her who gave her birth. ²⁹

The damsels, as she passed, surveyed, and blessed,

Courtiers and queens—and thus her charms confessed :

“ Say who is she, ³⁰ o'er every beauty born,

“ Who thus advances lovely as the morn, ³¹

“ Fair as the moon, ³² refulgent as the day, ³³

“ August as heaven when all its planets play ? ” ³⁴

IDYL VIII.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- Ch. VI. 11 I WENT down into the garden of nuts,
 To behold the fruits of the valley;
 To see whether the vine flourished,
 Whether the pomegranate blossomed.—
 There would I have granted thee my love:—
- 12 But I was not aware of my 'timid' mind,
 Which hurried me away as the chariots of Aminadib.

VIRGINS.

- 13 Return, return, O bride of Soloman!
 Return, return, that we may 'yet' respect thee.

IDYL VIII.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS,

ROYAL BRIDE.

DOWN to the nut-crowned gardens did I stray,¹
 To trace what fruits the verdant vales display;
 What flowers the vine, the young pomegranate prove;—
 And there to grant thee every pledge of love.²
 Whence, then, these fears my feet that backward bear
 Swift as Aminadib's triumphant car?³

VIRGINS.

Return, O bride of Soloman!⁴ return;
 Still claim our praise—these abject terrors spurn.

ROYAL BRIDE.

What do you expect from the bride of Solomon ?

VIRGINS.

'Fortitude,' like the conflict of two armies.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Why thus the bride of Soloman despise ?

What hope ye from her ?—virgins ! what advise ?

VIRGINS.

Firm should she be, unwavering in her post,

Firm as in battle each conflicting host.⁵

IDYL IX.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS,
KING SOLOMAN (afterwards).

VIRGINS.

- Ch. VII. 1 How beautiful are thy feet
 Within thy sandals, O prince's daughter !
 The moldings of thy limbs are as ' polished ' jewels,
 The work of a skilful artist.
- 2 Thy waist is a well-turned goblet,
 Replete with the ' luscious ' fluid ;
- 3 Thy bosom ' twin '-heaps of wheat,
 Covered over with lilies ;
 Thy two nipples two young roes that are twins ;
- 4 Thy neck is as a tower of ivory ;

IDYL IX.

ROYAL BRIDE, ATTENDANT VIRGINS,
KING SOLOMAN (afterwards).

VIRGINS.

How fair, O princess! are thy sandalled feet!¹
 White as the lily, as the lily sweet.
 Thy polished limbs, of what accordant mold!
 Lucid as jewels set in purest gold.
 The graceful goblet² vies not with thy waist,³
 Turned more harmonious, and with finer taste;
 And filled with fertile juices, to the heart⁴
 Dearer than aught the goblet can impart.
 Thy swelling bosom teems with nurture sweet,⁵
 As, in the fields, twin beds of milky wheat—
 Beds covered o'er with lilies silvery white,
 Alike the smell enchanting, and the sight;
 While, through each hill of palpitating snow,
 Peeps, clad in dun, a young and timid roe.
 Thy graceful neck, pre-eminent in power,
 Rises majestic as an ivory tower.⁶

- Thine eyes as the ' clear ' fish-streams in Heshbon,
 By the gate of Bath-rabbim ;
 Thy nose as the tower of Lebanon,
 Which looketh towards Damascus :
- 5 Thy rising head is as Carmel,
 ' Covered ' with its tresses in purple ' ribbands.'
 The king is held captive in their flowing ringlets.

KING SOLOMAN (*entering*).

- 6 How beautiful art thou ! how sweet !
 How ' framed,' O my love, for delights !
- 7 Lo ! thy stature is like a palm-tree,
 And thy bosom clusters ' of dates.'
- 8 I said ' in my heart,' I will go up to the palm-tree,
 I will clasp its branches.
 Yea, thy bosom shall now be unto me
 As the clusters of the vine,
 And the odor of thy breath as fragrant fruits ;
- 9 Thy speech also like wine the most delicious,
 Captivating to the palate,
 Flowing sweetly through the lips and teeth,

Bright are thine eyes, with ampler blaze that beam
 Than, by Bath-rabbim, Heshbon's limpid stream;⁷
 Thy nose outvies, so exquisitely turned,
 Th' unrivalled tower o'er Lebanon discerned:⁸
 Thy head is Carmel,⁹ and its tresses round,
 In purple decked,¹⁰ the groves o'er Carmel found:
 Loose to the breeze, in shadowy pomp they wave,
 Arrest the monarch, and his heart enslave.¹¹

KING SOLOMAN (*entering*).

How sweet, how beauteous art thou, O my love!
 Graceful thy form, the stately palm above;¹²
 And more delicious, in my heart's repute,
 Thy swelling bosom, than its clustering fruit.¹³
 Here will I banquet, here my mansion make,
 Climb round my palm-tree, and its fruit partake.
 More dear to me thy bosom¹⁴ than the sight
 Of clustering grapes imbued with purple light:
 Thy breath more fragrant than the honied pine;
 Thy dulcet voice more exquisite than wine—
 Than wine more racy, that no rival knows,
 Hailed by the lips, the palate as it flows.¹⁵

IDYL X.

ROYAL BRIDE.

- Ch. VII. 10 I AM my beloved's, and my beloved is mine,
 And to him my desire is obedient.
- 11 O come, my beloved ! let us go forth into the fields,
 Let us sojourn in the villages ;
- 12 Let us rise early to the vineyards ;
 Let us see if the vine flourish,
 If the tender grape appear,
 If the pomegranates blossom :
 There will I grant thee my love.
- 13 The mandrakes ' there ' diffuse their fragrance,
 And in our bower are all delicious ' fruits,'
 ' Both ' new and old,
 ' Which ' I have prepared for thee, O my beloved !—
- Ch. VIII. 1 O that thou wert as my ' infant ' brother,
 Sucking at the breasts of my mother !
 ' Then,' should I find thee abroad, I would kiss thee,
 Nor should I be reproached ' for my love.'
- 2 I would lead thee into my mother's house ;
 ' There ' would I bring thee, and, instructed by herself,

IDYL X.

ROYAL BRIDE.

I AM my love's, and my beloved mine ;¹
 To him each wish, each impulse I resign.²—
 Oh ! through the fields together let us stray ;
 Mid the cool hamlets pass the sultry day ;
 Wake with the morn, the dewy vineyards tread,
 Mark the young grape, the green pomegranate spread.
 Sweet mandrakes³ there the beating bosom burn ;
 Thy praise I'll covet, and thy love return :
 Fruits, fresh and old, beneath th' embowering shade,⁴
 For my beloved amply there are laid.—
 O wert thou to me as the babe that rests,
 My infant brother, on my mother's breasts !
 Then through the city should my love be told,
 Abroad I'd kiss thee, nor be deemed too bold.
 I'd watch thy steps where'er those steps might roam,
 Fondly I'd bring thee to my mother's home :
 And, taught by her,⁵ with liberal hand I'd pour
 The sweetest, costliest cordials from her store.

I would give thee to drink of aromatic wines,
Of the juice of my pomegranate.—

3 'Already' his left hand is under my head,
And his right hand embraceth me.

4 I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem!
By the roes, and by the hinds of the field,
That ye stir not, nor awake
My beloved until he please.

Pomegranate wine in tides for thee should flow,⁶
Each spice give fragrance, and each blossom blow.—
E'en now within his blest embrace I breathe,
His right hand o'er me, and his left beneath.—
Daughters of Salem born ! by all ye prize,
The graceful hind, the roe with luscious eyes,⁷
I charge you stir not—hushed be every breeze,
Watch o'er my love, nor wake him till he please.

IDYL XI.

VIRGINS, ROYAL BRIDE, KING SOLOMAN.

VIRGINS (*perceiving them approaching*).

Ch. VIII. 5 WHO is this that ascendeth from the wilderness
 Leaning on her beloved?

KING SOLOMAN (*entering with his Bride*).

I excited thee 'to love' under 'this' citron-tree :
 Here thy mother led thee forth,
 Here she led thee forth who bare thee.

ROYAL BRIDE.

6 O set me as a seal upon thy heart,
 As a seal upon thine arm !
 For love is strong as death,
 'And' jealousy cruel as the grave :
 Its flames are arrows of fire,
 Which Jehovah kindleth 'in the heavens.'

IDYL XI.

VIRGINS, ROYAL BRIDE, KING SOLOMAN.

VIRGINS (*perceiving them approaching*).—

Lo ! who is this, from where the desert¹ trends,
 Who hither, leaning on her love, ascends ?

KING SOLOMAN (*entering with his Bride*).

On this green couch, within this citron-grove,
 'Twas here I first excited thee to love.²
 Here first thy mother led thee to my arms,³
 Here she who bore thee first displayed thy charms.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Oh ! as a signet print it on thy heart !⁴
 Let never thence the fond memorial part !
 For love is strong as death ; and, should it rave,
 Keen jealousy is cruel as the grave :
 Its flames are arrows,⁵ piercing through the soul,
 Fierce as the flash when God's own thunders roll.⁶

KING SOLOMAN.

7 ' Yet ' many waters cannot quench love,
The floods cannot drown it.
Should a man for love offer the wealth of his house,
He would be utterly despised.

KING SOLOMAN.

O let my fair th' unkind suspicion spurn :
Love, once sincere, the breast will ever burn :
—O'er rival passions, deepest instincts reign—
Unquenched by waters, drowned not by the main.⁷
'Tis sold, 'tis bought not—'tis all price above :
Fools, only fools, would strive to purchase love.

IDYL XII.

ROYAL BRIDE, KING SOLOMAN.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Ch. VIII. 8 WE have a sister ' who is ' little,
 And hath no bosom.
 How shall we provide for our sister
 In the day when she shall be demanded ' in marriage !'

KING SOLOMAN.

9 Call her a wall—' and ' two towers of silver
 Will we build upon her ;
 Call her a door—' and ' we will inclose her
 With wainscot of cedar.

ROYAL BRIDE.

10 I myself am a wall,
 And my bosom resembles two towers,
 Therefore prevailed I in his eyes.—
 11 Soloman hath a vineyard in Baal-hamon,
 He hath let out the vineyard to tenants ;

IDYL XII.

ROYAL BRIDE, KING SOLOMAN.

ROYAL BRIDE.

For thee I left a tender sister's arms,
 Whose bosom boasts no captivating charms :¹
 No dower is her's, her graces to display—
 How may we aid her on her bridal day?

KING SOLOMAN.

Call her a wall ; and o'er this wall shall tower²
 Two silver turrets of resistless power.
 Call her a door ; and cedars shall encase,³
 And lead, through fragrance, to the royal grace.

ROYAL BRIDE.

I am a wall, and o'er my bosom rise
 The two fair towers that vanquished first thine eyes.⁴—
 Wide o'er the range of Baal-hamon's plains⁵
 A fertile vineyard to the king pertains :

Each is to yield him, for the fruit of it,
A thousand pieces of silver.

- 12 'This,' hitherto my vineyard,
Is now thine, O Soloman!
A thousand pieces 'from each' it brought me,
And two hundred 'was the salary'
To the superintendants of its produce.

KING SOLOMAN (*interrupting her*).

- 13 O thou beauty of the palm-tree gardens!
The damsels are attentive to thy voice,
Let me 'too' hear it. [Going.]

ROYAL BRIDE.

- 14 Make haste, O my beloved!
And resemble a roe, or a young hart,
Upon the mountains of spices.

Its thrifty tenants every year present
 A thousand silver pieces each for rent.
 This, once my portion, now, O king! is thine.
 A thousand silver pieces then were mine—
 From each a thousand; while the total soil
 Two hundred paid my stewards for their toil.

KING SOLOMAN (*interrupting her*).

Pride of the palm-tree shades!⁶ thy gentle voice
 The virgins hear attentive, and rejoice:
 Let me, too, hear thee; and, whate'er thy will,
 Speak it, O speak!—with rapture I'll fulfil. [Going.

ROYAL BRIDE.

Haste, haste, my love! with fond impatience dart;
 Haste o'er the mountains, like the bounding hart.⁷

END OF THE IDYLS.

NOTES.

NOTES.

NOTES ON IDYL I.

(¹) *For more than nectar* ———] THE metaphor is common to all oriental poets. Thus the inimitable Jayadéva, in his Gitágovindá, (concerning which see the preface, p. xix.) “O suffer me to quaff the liquid bliss of those lips! Restore thy slave with their water of life.” Thus again: “Thou who sippest nectar from the radiant lips of Pedmá, as the flattering Chacóra drinks the moon-beams!”—So the accomplished Khakani, a celebrated poet of the eleventh century:

خاقانی خلام تو مست شده ز جام تو

Khakani, thy slave is intoxicated with the *wine of thy beauty!*

The Greeks and Romans have been as little neglectful of the beauty of this figure. One of the closest parallelisms I have met with is in the following epigram, quoted by Longpierre from the Anthologia:

Κερη τις μ' ἐφίλησε ποθεσπερα χεῖλεσιν ὑγροῖς,
Νεκταρ ἐην το φιλημα· το γαρ στομα νεκταρος ἐπνει.
Νυν μεθυω το φιλημα, πολυν ταν ερωτα πεπωκως.

The maid whose moist lips gave me last night a kiss,

For the kiss gave me nectar—'twas nectar above:

E'en now am I drunk with the riotous bliss,

So largely I quaffed the rich goblet of love.

With this the reader may compare the following from Bion, on the death of Adonis: idyl A. 42.

————— Μεινον Ἀδωνι, ———

ὣς σε περιπτύξω, καὶ χεῖλεα χεῖλεσι μιξῶ.

Εγρεο τυτθον Αδωνι, το δ' αυ πυματον με φιλασος
 Τοσσῶτον με φιλασος ὅσον ζῶει το φιλαμα·
 Αχρὶς απο ψυχης ες εμον στομα κεις εμον ἦπαρ
 Πνευμα τεον ῥευση, το δε σευ γλυκυ φιλτρον αμειλξῶ,
 Εκ δε πτω τον ἐρωτα. —————

Stay, O Adonis! loved Adonis, stay!
 One last farewell, dear shadow! let me pay;
 Yet, yet embrace thee—lip to lip conjoin,
 Take thy last kisses, and return thee mine;
 Kiss till the kiss shall live; till from thy heart
 Thy fluent spirit through my limbs shall dart:
 Till once more on thy love, delicious draught!
 I banquet deep, and all its sweets be quaffed.

The exquisite song of Ben Jonson upon this subject is known to every one. Its first verse is in perfect unison with the idea of the Hebrew bard:

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
 And I will pledge with mine;
 And leave a kiss within the cup,
 And I'll not ask for wine.

In the *Lieder* of the German bard Jacobi the idea is somewhat varied, and the kiss is compared to a dart instead of a draught:

Mächtiger als Amor's bogen
 Ist ein kuss der zärtlichkeit.

The kiss of rapture strikes the heart
 Deeper than Love's most poignant dart.

For the phrase 'fragrance of thine own sweet perfumes,' see *idyl* VI. (7).

(2) ——— and, with triumphant voice, } 'We will cele-
 More than o'er wine, ——— } brate thy love
 more than wine.' In the common version, 'We will remem-
 ber.' It is well observed by Dr. Hodgson, that נִבְּרָה being

in the conjugation Hiphil, does not mean 'to remember,' but 'to cause to be remembered.' We will cause it to be remembered; that is, we will praise or celebrate it. Thus in Isaiah, xxvi. 13. שִׁמְךָ נִזְכֵּר, 'We will celebrate thy name.'

(³) *O matchless excellence! and void of spot!*] 'Thou art every way lovely.' In the Bible version, 'The upright love thee:' and in a manuscript notice of my friend Dr. Geddes, 'The virtuous do love thee.'—The original words מִיִּשְׁרִים אֶהְבְּךָ contain a difficulty which none of the commentators seem able to surmount. The Bible version, however, can scarcely be admitted; it is both very remote from the original, and seems to be quitting the literal sense for the allegoric. The interpretation of Sanchius (in Pol. Synops.), if it were but better supported, appears most consistent with the context. He paraphrases the words *Omnes amores insunt tibi*, 'All loveliness dwells within thee:' and indeed the bride's speech, which follows, seems most naturally to suppose some such previous compliment. Without this, her vindication of her person follows very abruptly and awkwardly; but, this admitted, her reply is both natural and apposite. "You compliment me on my beauty," says she, "which I can consider as nothing but irony and sarcasm—as an expression intended to satirize my want of it: but do not despise me on account of the darkness of my complexion; for, though brown as the tents of the wild Afabs, I am finely formed as the graceful foldings of the pavilions of Solomon: and even this darkness of my skin was not a natural blemish, but the effect of some severe usage I received in my younger years."

"After all, it must be confessed that the Hebrew words, as they stand at present in the common text, can hardly be brought to yield the sense here given them. For even if we suppose the word אֶהְבְּךָ (love thee) to have crept into the text, instead of יִשְׁבּוּבְךָ (abide in thee), we shall hardly find

another instance of מִיִּשְׁרָיִם used in the sense of 'beautiful' or 'personal' charms."—Anonymous Translation of Solomon's Song, printed for Dodsley, 1764.

The more accurate version is, perhaps, 'they justly love thee;' which is of equal import with 'thou art justly or deservedly beloved:' and such is the illustration of Mr. Green; not essentially varying from the translation adopted in the present text.

(4) ————— *my face is brown:*] The common version for 'brown' reads 'black;' which is using the original term שְׁחוּרָה in a very hyperbolic sense indeed; its more general interpretation being 'brown,' 'discoloured,' 'shadowy,' like the twilight; synonymously with the Persian (تاریک) *tarik*. And, from many passages which follow, it is obvious that even the term *brown* could only be applied to herself by the beautiful bride from an excess of diffidence and modesty; for in the ensuing idyls she is repeatedly denominated fair, and even fairest of the fair; and the whiteness of her complexion is compared to the moon, to ivory, and to lilies. The whole can only mean, therefore, that, in her own opinion, she was not quite so fair as in an earlier period of her life, before her brothers had ungenerously made her a kind of attendant upon themselves.

Tasso has given precisely the same description of his mistress Leonora, in a well-known sonnet addressed to herself:

Bruna sei tu, ma bella

Qual virgine viola.

Though brown thy visage, comely yet

As the virgin violet.

(5) *Comely as tapestry* —————] With Dr. Hodgson I translate וריעה 'tapestry,' instead of 'curtains.' It is perfectly synonymous with the (پرده) *perdhe* of the Persians,

or the *aulæum* of the Latins, which last, in his oration *pro Cæl.* Cicero has employed to signify the former of these terms. I cannot with this elegant critic, however, convert אֲדָמִי into 'trees' in the present instance, and read therefore, with the common version, 'tents of Kedar,' instead of 'spice-trees of Kedar.' The wild Arabs are denominated in the Scriptures. *Kedareens*: their tents, which by the Bedouins are called *dow-arrab*, are to this day constructed of coarse brown hair-cloth, obtained from their dark-coloured and shaggy goats. The darkness of their colour is thus described by Niebuhr, I. 187: "Leurs pavillons sont d'une toile épaisse, noire, ou rayée de noir et de blanc."

(6) *Yet scorn me not* —————] 'Yet look not disdainfully upon me.'—The original is more faithfully interpreted thus, than according to the common version: 'Look not upon me.' רָאֵה *respexit, ne respiciatis*, 'regard it not.'

(7) *My mother's children* —————] It is well conjectured by Houbigant, that by the phrase בְּנֵי אִמִּי, *Filii matris meæ*, we are to understand the children of her mother by a prior husband. The anonymous translator of these poems, printed for Dodsley in 1764, whose name I have not been able to learn, but to whose ingenious and spirited commentary I shall often have occasion to recur, has more accurately rendered the verb נָחַרְו 'were severe to,' than as it occurs in our common Bibles, 'were angry with.'

(8) *I kept their vineyards* —————] The term כֶּרֶם 'vineyard' appears to have been of very general signification among the Hebrews, and still continues so among many eastern nations of modern day. See Joel i. 11, 12.—As comprising most commonly the larger part of an estate, which, among the Hebrews, was appropriated to vines, it was applied, by a synecdoche, to the estate at large, of whatever it might consist; and from such application to the whole of

an estate real, it should seem to have been afterwards extended to an estate personal, and even to the individual person itself. By the phraseology of neglecting her own vineyard, and keeping those of her brothers and sisters, we may therefore readily understand the fair bride to assert that she had been compelled to neglect her own person through the perpetual toil and attention which was demanded of her by her brothers or sisters, in decorating themselves, or assisting in their concerns.

(9) ——— *beneath the noon thy flock reclines?*] The custom of reposing in the shade during the heat of noon-day, here referred to by the fair speaker, was not confined to eastern nations alone. We have a beautiful description of the same fact in the *Culex* of Virgil, v. 116.

Et jam compellente vagæ pastore capellæ
Ima susurrantis repetebant ad vada lymphæ,
Quæ subter viridem residebant cœrula muscum,
Jam medias operum partes evectus erat sol,
Cum densas pastor pecudes cogebat in umbras.

Now, at the goatherd's call, the kids once more
Give their gay sports, their devious rambles o'er,
And to the bottom dash the blue-tinged fosse,
Whose murmuring waters wash th' o'erhanging moss.
Now, half the labours of the sun complete,
To shades the shepherd and his flock retreat.

Thus again, *Georg. iii. 331.*

Æstibus at mediis umbrosam exquirere vallem;
Sicubi magna Jovis antiquo robore quercus
Ingentes tendit ramos, aut sicubi nigrum
Illicibus crebis sacra nemus accubat umbra.

When noontide flames, down cool sequestered glades,
Lead where some giant oak the dell o'er shades,

Or where the gloom of many an ilex throws
The sacred darkness that invites repose. SOTHEY.

(¹⁰) *And leave thy kids the shepherd's tents beside.*] ‘Leave them under the protection of the shepherds, and let them feed by their tents during thine absence.’ Theocritus has a similar passage, idyl Γ. 1.

Κωμασδω ποτι ταν Αμαρυλλιδα· ται δε μοι αιγες
Βοσκονται κατ' ορος, και ο Τιτυρος αυτας ελαυνει.
Τιτυρ' εμιν το καλον πεφιλαμενε, βοσκει τας αιγας,
Και ποτι ταν κραναν αγε, Τιτυρε.-----

I fly to Amaryllis, and a guide
For you, my kids, in Tityrus provide.
Here o'er this hill, dear shepherd! let them feed;
Then, Tityrus! to yonder fountain lead.

So Gessner, the Theocritus of Germany, in one of his idyls:
“Komm mit mir!—du Alexis magst indess die schafe und die ziegen hüten.” “Come with me, Micon!—and do thou, Alexis, guard meanwhile our sheep and goats.”

The first idyl is in the true style of pastoral poetry, and is admirably adapted to the costume of the people among whom it was written. Among all oriental nations—excepting, from political motives, among the native Egyptians—the occupation of the shepherd was held in the highest honour; but particularly among the Hebrews, whose patriarchs were for the most part of this class. The first conquerors of Egypt, who (according to a very ingenious conjecture of Mr. Allwood) were direct descendents of Chus, the grandson of Noah, were denominated, during the entire course of their superiority in this country, Ὑκσος (*Hycsos*)—which Manetho interprets ‘royal’ or ‘illustrious shepherds’—from the partiality they evinced, through the whole duration of their dynasty, to this innocent and pleasant mode of life.

And when, shortly after their extirpation, in consequence of an insurrection of the natives, the family of Jacob were driven into this quarter for food, they were allotted by Joseph the very district of Goshen (Cush-ain), to which the royal shepherds had retreated as their last post in the country—a district peculiarly appropriated to pasturage; and where they had entered into a convention with the insurgents, who guarantied them a safe passage through Egypt, upon their engagement to exile themselves without farther molestation. The Hebrew kings, and even Jehovah himself, were perpetually exhibited in the character of shepherds of Israel; while the Jewish church was represented almost as frequently in the character of a shepherdess. Thus Jerem. vi. 2.

I have compared the daughter of Zion to a damsel comely
and delicate :

The shepherds with their flocks, shall come unto her ;

They shall pitch their tents around her,

Their flocks shall every one feed in his place.

The twenty-third Psalm abounds in a similar train of imagery, and affords one of the most beautiful instances of pastoral poetry that has ever been compiled in any language. The exalted characters of a royal shepherd and shepherdess are appropriated to Solomon and his beloved bride in the present idyl; and together with the characters the sacred bard has, with the utmost degree of poetical precision, connected the manners and occupation of pastoral life. Something of the same figurative and popular representation occurs throughout the greater part of the whole diwan or fasciculus of idyls, of which the entire song consists; but the allegory is no where more purely preserved than in the instance before us.

NOTES ON IDYL II.

(¹) *But the famed steed in Pharaoh's splendid car.*] The finest and most elegant of the daughters of Jerusalem is in this verse paralleled with the finest and most elegant of animals, and one of pre-eminent beauty in its own class. The similar comparison with which Theocritus has complimented Helen is remarked by all the commentators: idyl IH. 29.

—————‘Ατ’—————

Ἡ καπρὺ νυπαρισσὸς, ἡ ἄρματι Θεσσαλὸς ἵππος·

Ὡδὲ καὶ ἁ ῥοδοχρῶς Ἑλένη Λακεδαιμονίῳ κοσμος.

As o'er the lawn a cypress or a steed,

In graceful trappings, of Thessalian breed—

So, chief of beauties, Lacedæmon's pride,

The rosy-fingered Helen all outvied.

It appears, from 2 Chron.i. 16, that Solomon frequently applied to Egypt for horses. The ensuing verse also notices a chariot which was purchased in the same country at the enormous price of six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse which cost not less than one hundred and fifty. It may be that this is the chariot and horse referred to in the passage before us; but it is more probable, I think—as the name of Pharaoh is used in conjunction with them—that it was a chariot and horse, or horses, which had been received as a present by Solomon from the Egyptian monarch, with whom he was on terms of the closest political alliance, and with whose house he at one period connected himself more intimately still by a matrimonial union with his daughter. If this be true, the present comparison will perhaps have an advantage over that of Theocritus, as extending to the

sumptuous trappings of the beautiful steed, and the graceful and brilliant ornaments of the royal bride. And that this was an idea very prominent in the poet's mind, may be easily collected from the eulogy with which the monarch immediately bursts forth on the magnificence of the bridal attire :

How rich thy brows with radiant jewels bound! &c.

I can by no means agree with the greater number of our commentators, therefore, who confine the comparison, or who even suppose it applies, to the excellent management or training to which the steed had been reduced, as an apt emblem of the ready subjection of the bride. Such an idea has surely nothing bridal in it ; it is uncharacteristic, if not indecorous, upon an occasion like the present. In the Bible version we find the reading 'To a company of horses.' In a manuscript note of Dr. Geddes, 'To one of my horses in the chariots of Pharaoh.'

(2) ——— *thy neck that strings of pearls surround!*] In the standard Bible, 'thy neck with chains of gold.' It does not appear, observes Dr. Hodgson very justly, by any expression in the Hebrew, that they were 'chains of gold.' Were it necessary to take any liberty, they should rather be called 'chains of pearls'—pearls drilled and strung on thread ; for *הַרְרָן*, in Rabbinical writings, signifies, according to Buxtorf, 'to string.' The Persian ladies, says Olearius, wear two or three rows of pearls round the head, beginning on the forehead and descending down the cheeks and under the chin, so that their faces seem to be set in pearls. This coiffure he judged to have been very ancient among the orientals, and imagines it to be the same as is described in the text before us.—"The sultana Hafiten," says lady M. W. Montague, "wore round her talpoche, or head-dress, four strings of

pearls, the finest and whitest in the world." Vol. ii. lxxxix.

—See Mr. Harmer's Outlines, and Mr. Parkhurst, Art. תר.

(3) *And at his banquet* —————] במסבו *in circuito suo*; 'in the midst of his guests,' arrayed, according to custom, in the figure of a circle. The phrase مجلس ارا (*mejlis ara*), 'gracing the banquet,' is in common use among the Persian poets, to delineate an elegant woman.

(4) *A casque of myrrh* —————] צרור המור is, according to Castalio, 'a wreath or nosegay of flowery myrrh.' Mr. Parkhurst has a better conjecture. It seems to be, says he, what Dioscorides, lib. i. 74, calls στακτη (*stacte*), and which he informs us makes a perfume of itself. It is very fragrant and dear, and is said to be at present unknown. The eastern ladies were accustomed to inclose this, as well as many other perfumes, in a casket of gold or ivory of the figure of a turret or small tower—as the Hebrew term expressly signifies, היכלי שן—and to place such ornaments in their bosoms, suspended by an elegant chain from their necks. The Persians employ a little casket for the same purpose, which they denominate نافه *nafeh*.

(5) *That grace the cypress in En-gedi's bowers*—] In the common version, 'a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.' The כפר, or cypress-plant, here referred to, is doubtful. It is not, assuredly, the cypress of our own gardens, but perhaps the aromatic plant which (according to sir Thomas Brown) is indigenous in Palestine, and produces 'a sweet and odorate bush of flowers, out of which was made the famous *oleum cyprinum*.' The correspondent term in the Septuagint is Κυπρη; in the Vulgate *Cypri*. It is from these flowers the oriental hinna is obtained—a beautiful golden dye, with which the natives tinge their hair and the

extremities of their fingers, and whence the Persian ladies frequently derive a name for themselves. Thus in a gazel of Gunná Beigum, quoted by sir W. Jones, I. 226.

Hàì mèrì t'arah' jigar khúni terà muddatsè
Ai hínna ciscì tujhè khwáhishi pábúsì hai.

Like me, O Hinna! thy heart has long been full of blood:—
Whose foot art thou desirous of kissing?

Mr. Harmer has given a particular account of this plant in his very valuable *Outlines*, extracted from the *Travels of Rauwolff*, a writer who flourished in the reign of Elizabeth. Hasselquist, Russel, and Shaw, have all made mention of the same plant, and attributed to it the same qualities.

En-gedi, according to Mr. Maundrell, was situate about three miles east of Bethlehem. It was more celebrated for its aromatic shrubs than for its vines. But I have already observed, in note on idyl I. (8), that the term כרם 'vineyard' was applied to nurseries and estates of every description.

(6) *Doves' are thine eyes,* —————] “To conceive the force of this expression we must not refer it to our common pigeons, but to the large and beautiful eyes of the doves of Syria. They who have seen that fine eastern bird the carrier-pigeon will need no commentary on this place.” New Translation of Solomon's Song.—See Brown's Observations.

(7) *This flowery couch!—these fir, these cedar-beams!* }
This leafy roof, ————— }

For this elegant and equally accurate interpretation I am totally indebted to Dr. Hodgson, prior to whose version the whole passage, at least the whole of the 17th verse of the common translation, was referred to the interior of the palace. רעננה, in our Bibles translated ‘green,’ is more properly ‘flowery,’ and is generally so rendered by the best

critics. The 'green' or 'flowery bed,' as the passage is ordinarily interpreted, has little or no connexion with the remainder of the description: 'The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.' But by the interpretation here adopted the entire passage is rendered at once uniform and admirably picturesque. The lovers are not in a house, but a grove, where the spreading branches of the firs and the cedars are poetically called the beams and the roof of their chamber. Thus Milton, describing Adam's bower, *Par. Lost*, iv. 692.

————— the roof,
Of thickest covert, was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle; and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf.

The following description of Homer is not widely different from either, though it is to be understood literally: *Il. Ω.* 191.

Αυτος δ' ες θαλαμον κατεβησατο κηωντα,
Κεδρινον, ὑψοροφον ———

—— to his fragrant chamber he repaired
Himself, with cedar lined, and lofty-roofed.

(⁸) *A mere wild rose, —————*] In the common version 'the,' or rather 'a rose of Sharon.'—Sharon was a canton of Palestine, not peculiarly remarkable for the beauty of its roses: and it is obvious from the context, that, so far from claiming any merit to herself by this figurative expression, the fair bride means to delineate her person with extreme modesty and diffidence. We may learn from this, as well as from a variety of other passages, that she was not the daughter of Pharaoh king of Egypt, as contended for by many commentators;—she was not of Egyptian origin,

or royal descent, but a rose of the fields of Sharon—a native of Palestine. In the Septuagint, the word ‘ of Sharon ’ is omitted, or rather exchanged for *bassadeb*, ‘ of the field ;’ and the Basil Latin version, and, if I recollect aright, the Spanish Bible of Cassiodoro Reyna, follow the same reading—*rosa campi*. This, as an explanation, is just ; but it is obvious that the comment has usurped the place of the text.

(9) ————— *mid the fair* } Thus Mos-
So looks my love, so shines beyond compare. } chus, id.
 B. 71.

Οἷα περ ἐν Χαρίτεσσι διεπρεπεν Ἀφοργνεῖα.

So Venus mid the Graces, peerless still.

Or, as the same idea is given more diffusely by Theocritus,
 idyl. xviii. 20.

Οἷα Ἀχαιῶδων γαῖαν πατεῖ ὑδμήι ἀλλὰ.—
 Ἄμμες γὰρ πασαι συνομάλικες, ᾗς ὁρμος ὡῦτος
 Χρυσάμεναις ἀνδρίστι παρ’ Εὐρωταο λούετροις,
 Τετρακίς ἐξηκοντα κεραι, θηλὺς νεολαία·
 Ταν ὑδ’ ἀν τις ἀμῶμος, ἐπεὶ χ’ Ἑλένα παρὶσῶθη·
 Ἀὼς ἀντελλοῖσα κάλον διεφαινε πρόσωπον,
 Ποτνια νύξ ἄτε, λευκὸν εἶαρ χεῖμενος ἀνεῖτος,
 Ὡδὲ καὶ ἅ χρυσεὰ Ἑλένα διεφαίνεται ἐν ἡμῖν,
 Πύρρα, μεγάλα.—

No Grecian charms like her’s the gaze could strike,
 And much she gives thee if she give her like.
 When from the baths by clear Eurotas fed,
 With odors graced, our wonted course we sped,
 Though threescore rival beauties formed our band,
 Each showed defect when Helen joined the strand.
 As looks the lovely morn o’er brooding night,
 As the fair spring when winter takes his flight,

So shone the golden Helen—o'er the rest
With happier form, and ampler graces blest.

Jayadéva has a description of the divine Rádhá perfectly in unison with this of Theocritus; and it forms a chorus, or interlocutory verse, to one of the songs in his *Gitágovindá*.
“Surely thou descendest from heaven, O slender damsel! attended by a company of youthful goddesses; and all their beauties are collected in thee!”

(¹⁰) ——— *its head the citron rears,*] In the common version ‘apple-tree,’ a term that has been too generally applied by old English translators to every tree that bears a globular fruit, and of whose exact and botanical character they were doubtful. I have here followed the example of the anonymous translator, in interpreting תפוח ‘the citron-tree,’ upon the authority of the Chaldee paraphrase, which observes with what superior beauty that rich fruitful plant must appear among the barren trees of the wood.—בתפוחים below (¹⁴), ought, perhaps, in like manner to be rendered ‘citrons’ rather than ‘apples’ or fruits in general, and is so translated by Mr. Green.

(¹¹) *For him I sighed* ———] “Under his shade I languished.” GEDDES.

(¹²) *O bear me* ———] In the common version we meet with the verb הִבִּיטֵנִי, translated according to the points, in the præter tense. I have here followed, in company with several other commentators, the Septuagint, which gives us the imperative mood in its stead; by which variation the passage is rendered far more spirited and dramatic, and reminds us of the elegant and animated apostrophe of Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 487.

——— O qui me gelidis in vallibus Hæmi
Sistat, et ingenti ramorum protegat umbra!

O bear me to the vales where Hæmus waves
With giant foliage o'er his shadowy caves!

(¹³) ——— *house of bliss*, ———] In the original וּבֵית עֵלִי 'banqueting-house,' or 'house of wine.' House of wine is a metaphor for house of love; as love and wine, in idyl I. (¹), and many other places, are illustrative of each other. It is a general term, and synonymous with the Persian (مَنْزِل) *menzil*.

(¹⁴) *Cheer me with cordials!* ———] The common version reads 'with flagons'—consistently, indeed, with the original. The Septuagint, בַּשִּׁמְן, with 'precious ointments' or 'perfumes.' Mr. Green has followed the latter. It is probable that the 'flagons' or 'cordials' referred to were the 'spicy or perfumed wines' mentioned in chap. viii. 2. of the Bible translation, and in idyl X. (⁶), of the present version. The reason of exchanging the common term 'apples' for 'citrons' has already been noticed in the note (¹⁰) of the idyl before us. If the word apples be retained, it should be citron-apples—apples being a term of almost universal application, in all languages, to every fruit of a large and globular form not involved in a nucleus or shell. Thus Camoëns, in his description of the Island of Venus, Lus. ix. 56.

Nil arvores estão ao ceo subindo,
Com *pomos* odoriferos e bellos;
A 'l arangeira, &c.

A thousand boughs aloft to heaven display
Their fragrant *apples* shining to the day:
The orange-tree, &c.

Michaëlis proposes, "Support me with verdant herbs; spread 'fragrant' fruits under me; for I am wounded with love:" but his version is less beautiful, and his variation from the common reading unnecessary. The entire passage is so consentaneous with the following verses of Anacreon, that I cannot avoid inserting them: Od. xxi. edit. Barnes.

Δοτε μοι, δοτ', ω γυναικες
 Βρομιε πιειν αμυστι—
 'Υπο κυματος γαρ ηδη
 Προποθεις αναστεναζω·
 Δοτε δ' αιθεων εκεινων
 Στεφανες δ' οως πυκαζω
 Τα μετωπα με πικανει·
 Το δε καυμα των ερωτων,
 Κραδιη, τινι σκεπασσω.

Bring me, damsels! bring the bowl!
 Let me rouse my languid soul:
 I die with heat—the thirsty day
 Through every vein drinks life away.
 Round my hot brows these garlands fade;
 With garlands fresh my temples shade:
 But, O my heart! what shadowy grove
 Can skreen thee from the beams of Love?

With these verses the reader may compare the following, equally elegant, though not quite so ardent, from the German of Stäudlin, Gedichte, band i. 22.

Düftet süß, ihr schwankin linden!
 Düfte lieblich, blütenstrauch!
 Komm von deinen blümenhöhen,
 Zefir! komm mich anzuwehen
 Mit der Liebe sanftem hauch.

Softly wave, ye woodland glooms!
 Ye odors, quit your flowery grove!
 Come, in all thy heavenly blooms,
 Zephyr! round me shed perfumes—
 Shed the dulcet breath of Love!

Duport, whose elegant Latin version (printed in 1676) is this moment put into my hands, has, I find, thus delicately rendered the phrase in our established translation “for I am sick with love:”

Languidum multo mihi cor amore.

The present text is not widely different.

(15) *Already in his blest embrace I breathe,*] Thus the impassioned Rádhá, in the Songs of Jayadéva:—“Bring, O friend! that vanquisher of the dæmon Cési, to sport with me, who am repairing to a secret bower! Bring him who formerly slept on my bosom to recline with me on a green bed of leaves just gathered, while his lip sheds dew, and my arms enfold him!”

(16) *The graceful hind, the roe with luscious eyes,*] These animals are still in equal repute among the Asiatics for the elegance of their form or the languishing lustre of their eyes; and the adjuration here introduced is therefore pertinent and obvious. Thus, in the following beit or couplet of Motanabi:

وفاحت عنبرا
 ورنّت غالا

Her breath was amber, and her look
 The languid roe's mild lustre took.

The 'צב, or roe, is the *nawara*, or *gazbal* (غزال) of the Arabians and Persians; by the former of which names the amorous Lebeid, one of the seven writers of the *Moallakat*, immortalises his mistress. The Turks commonly denominate this voluptuous animal (أَبُو) *abû*; and *abû-cheshm* (أَبُو چشَم) 'roe-eyed,' or 'fawn-eyed,' is a complimentary epithet among them in the present day. According to Sir William Jones, it is an animal of the antelope kind. He tells us he had seen one of them, exquisitely beautiful, and with eyes uncommonly black and large. He adds, that it is the same sort of roe to which Solomon alludes; and that the Turkish epithet *abû-cheshm* corresponds to the Greek ἐλκωπις—by the grammarians properly interpreted, *quæ nigris oculis decora est et venusta*, 'beautifully ornamented with black eyes.'—*Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations*, vol. iv. 546.

The Arabic term *hourî* (so well known from its frequent recurrence in the *Alcoran*) is of similar meaning, and can only be rendered literally 'a black-eyed maid.'

The Persians and Arabians probably derived the idea from the Hindus, whose poets abound with the same. Thus in the *Gitâgovindâ*: "The *fawn-eyed* Râdhâ gazed on the bright face of Crishna." And again: "Whence the *antelopes of thine eyes* may sport at pleasure."

(17) *Watch o'er my love, nor awake him*—] Michaëlis, in his edition of Dr. Lowth's *Prelections*, proposes, 'That ye stir not, nor awake *this* lovely and amiable person until he please.' Such a change can only be supported by a different punctuation from that of the Hebrew Bible; and, when thus forcibly introduced, conveys a less tender idea.

NOTES ON IDYL III.

(¹) *Light as a hart, o'er heights and hills he flew.*] I have already observed, in the note on idyl II. (¹⁶), the high estimation in which the hind and roe, the hart and antelope, were held, and still continue to be in all eastern countries, from the voluptuous beauty of their eyes, the delicate elegance of their form, or their graceful agility of action. The names of these animals were perpetually applied, therefore, to persons, whether male or female, who were supposed to be possessed of any of their respective qualities. In 2 Sam. i. 19, Saul is denominated 'the roe of Israel;' and in v. 18 of the ensuing chapter we are told that 'Asahel was as light of foot as a wild roe'—a phraseology perfectly synonymous with the epithet 'swift-footed,' which Homer has so frequently bestowed upon his hero Achilles. Thus again, Lament. i. 6.

Her princes are like harts which find no pasture;
They are fled without strength before their pursuers.

And further, in a passage more similar still to the present, Habak. iii. 19.

The Lord Jehovah is my strength;
He will make my feet like hinds' feet,
He will cause me to tread again on my own hills.

Our poet, assimilating the royal bridegroom to a hart or a roe, supposes him to fly forwards from his native mountains, in consequence of his having found favour in the sight of his beloved. Hafiz, in like manner, compares himself to the same order of animals; but adds, that he is compelled to

remain on his hills and in his deserts, because the delicate *fawn*, his mistress, has not taken compassion upon him. See the commencement of gazel vii. in Reviski's arrangement under the letter I.

صبا بلطف بگو آن غزال رعنا را
که سر بکوه و بیابان تو دادهء مارا
شکر فروش که عیبرش دراز باد چرا
تغذی نکند طوطی شکر خارا

Tell to that tender fawn, O Zephyr! tell
O'er rocks, o'er desert hills, she makes us dwell.
Whence has such sweetness—(ever may she live!)—
No blest remorse her honeyed bard to give?

The following parallelism of Horace is well known: lib. I. od. xxiii.

Vitas hinnuleo me similis, Chloe,
Quærenti pavidam montibus aviis
Matrem, non sine vano
Aururum et silvæ metu.

Thou fliest me, Chloe, like the fawn
That finds its timid dam withdrawn;
And trembling at each branch that waves,
Seeks her mid pathless cliffs and caves.

But it is not so generally known that Horace derived the idea of this simile from the exquisite fragment of Anacreon, preserved by Athenæus, ix. 12; beginning

Ὅς ἐν ὕλῃ κεραισσομένης—

The nursling fawn, that in some shade
 Its antlered mother leaves behind,
 Is not more wantonly afraid,
 More timid of the rustling wind. MOORE.

(²) *Lo! through the window, through the lattice green,*] It is well observed by Mr. Harmer that כהל means the green wall, as it were, of a chiosk, or eastern arbour; which is thus described by Lady M. W. Montague:—"In the midst of the garden in the chiosk; that is, a large room, commonly beautified with a fine fountain in the midst of it. It is raised nine or ten steps, and inclosed with gilded lattices, round which vines, jasmines, and honeysuckles, make a sort of green wall. Large trees are planted round this place, which is the scene of their greatest pleasures."—*Outlines of a New Commentary on Solomon's Song.* Observ. x. p. 140.

It appears to have been from a chiosk of this kind that the mother of Sisera looked out, and inquired concerning the expected triumph of her son: Judges v. 28.

The mother of Sisera looked out of her window,
 And cried aloud through the lattice.

Gessner seems to have had his eye on this description of our poet in the following passage from an idyl entitled *Der Herbstmorgen*, or *The Autumnal Morning*:—"Die frühe morgensonne flimmerte schon hinter dem berg herauf, und verkündigte den schönsten herbst-tag, als Micon ans gitterfenster seiner hütte trat. Schon glänzte die sonne durch das purpurgestreifte, grün und gelb gemischeter eblaub, das, von saften morgenwinden bewegt, am fenster sich wöhlte. "Beautifully over the mountains glittered the joyous dawn, and unfolded one of the loveliest days of Autumn, when Micon placed himself at the latticed window of his cottage. Brilliantly shone the sun through the purple, green, and

golden vine-branches, which twined around the lattice, waving to the morning breeze."

(²) *The birds their songs resume* ———.] 'The season of the song is come.'—Mr. Harmer equally justly and ingeniously conjectures that the song here referred to is peculiarly that of the nightingale. "The fable of the amours of the nightingales with the roses," he observes, "is as well known in Turkey as any story in Ovid among us.—Rose-trees and vines," continues Mr. H. "blossom nearly at the same time:—roses appear sooner by a few days, but continue till vines are in flower." This song joins the time of the singing of nightingales and the voice of the turtle together: and Lady M. W. Montague, in a letter dated April 1, O. S. speaks of turtles as cooing on the cypress-trees of her garden from morning till night, vol. ii. p. 52.—At Aleppo, about the middle of April, O. S. the country is said to be in 'full bloom;' and as the productions of the country about Aleppo and Judæa are nearly in the same degree of forwardness, it is no wonder that the Jewish poet represents the time of the blossoming of the vines, of the singing of the nightingale, and of the cooing of the turtle, as the time of *flowers* too: it is when they are in the greatest abundance.—*Outlines of a New Commentary, &c.* p. 149.

Thus Mr. Mickle, in his version of the *Lusiad*, book ix.

The glowing strain the nightingale returns,
And in the bowers of Love the turtle mourns.

The conjunction of these images in the present instance is, however, entirely his own; for Camoens, instead of the turtle lamenting in his bower, exhibits the snowy swan pouring his cadence at a distance on the waters.

A longo da agoa niveo cisne canta,
Responde che da ramo Philomela.

These observations are so fully confirmed, and so exquisitely sung, in the third gazel of Hafiz, under the letter **ل**, and the idea of the poem before us so closely adhered to, that I cannot avoid presenting the two first beits to the reader; premising, however, that the *bulbul* (بلبل), or Persian nightingale, is a far more beautiful bird than the European; and that the *nuruz* (نوروز), or vernal season referred to, is always a period of general hilarity among the inhabitants of this happy climate.

رونق عهد شبابست و کر بستانرا
 مر سد مزوه کل بلبل خوش الکانرا
 ای صبا کر با جوانان چمن باز رسی
 جد مت ما برسان سرو کل و ریکابرا

The charms of spring once more the fields salute :—
 Ope to the rose, ye nightingales! your suit :
 Ye Zephyrs, 'mid the meadow-youths that rove,
 Bear to the rose, the basil sweet, our love.

To the same effect the elegant Jami, in his **یوسف و زلیخا**, 'Loves of Joseph and Zuleikha:'

بہس صد دستہ ریکان پیش بلبل
 بخوا ہد جاطرش جز نخت کل

Though countless shrubs of balmiest breath
 Their fascinating forms disclose,

The constant nightingale till death
Still covets his beloved rose.

With this exquisite extract from the bards of Irán the reader may compare the following from the first pastoral poet of Greece: Theocr. epigr. iv.

αεναον δε

Ῥειθρον απο σπιλαδων παντοσε τηλεθαι
 Δαφναις, και μυρτοισι, και ευωδει κυπαρισσω,
 Ενθα περιξ κεχυται βοτρυοποις ἑλικι
 Ἀμπελος· εισιμινοι δε λιγυφθογγοισιν αοιδαῖς
 Κοσσυφοι αχευσιν ποικιλοτραυλα μελη·
 Ξεθαι αηδονιδες μινυρισμασιν αντιαχευσι,
 Μελπυσαι στομασιν ταν μελιγην οπα.

Fresh from the rock the playful fountains beat
 'Mid myrtles, laurels, and the cypress sweet,
 Or where the vine's luxuriant tendrils run,
 And the young clusters ripen to the sun.
 Woke by the spring, the blackbird's luscious throat
 Pours all the various volume of his note ;
 To nightingale the nightingale replies,
 And all his love in honeyed accents sighs.

There is so much of the imagery of the sacred bard—of melodious birds, and sportive harts and hinds—in the following of Chaucer, that the reader will not be displeased with its insertion :

On every bough the birdis herd I syng
 With voice of angell, in ther harmonie
 That busied 'hem, ther birdis forthe to bryng,
 And little prettie conies to ther plaie gan hie ;
 And furthir all about I gan espie

The dreadful roe, the buck, the hart and hind,
Squirils and bestis small of gentle kind.

(4) *The glossy turtle awakes his voice to love*;] So the tender Sadi, in his گلستان (*Gulistan*), or 'Bower of Roses'—a poem which should be translated into every European language, but which has hitherto, I believe, only appeared in German, by Olearius, 1654; and in French, by an anonymous orientalist who dates his version 1737.

ما سر مبین ذکر الکبھی بهیسهعی
و تو نبعت ورق الکبھی صاحب معی

I hear the love-sick turtle's gentle strain—
Ah! heardst thou mine, together we'd complain.

So also Ferdusi, uniting the two images together :

خرو شنده قهری و بلبل زسرو

From cypress-boughs, in mingling strain,
The nightingale and dove complain.

(5) *Her figs the fig-tree sweetens*, ———] "The fig-trees in Judæa bear double crops; the former of which is ripe in spring, and is denominated *buccore*, as the latter is *kermouse*. חנני signifies the 'unripe fig' (*crudum, immaturum*): חנני is properly '*condivit aromatibus*.' By a metaphor it is applied to fruits, and signifies '*maturat, seu dulcorat, dulces reddit*.'" Pearce, Calasio, Lud. Capel. Anonymous Translation; which last I have just learnt is the work of Dr. Percy, the present bishop of Dromore.—Dr. Lowth retains the original meaning:

Ficus dulci succo condivit fructus suos.

(6) *Fragrant and fresh, the lucid clusters shine, —*] With the ingenious Dr. Percy, I have here followed Le Clerc: “Aut סמדר sunt minutæ uvæ, quæ tum in medio flore cernuntur, aut ea voce, cujus origo est ignota, significantur præcoces vites quæ primum omnium florent.” In many versions, however, both ancient and modern, instead of the ‘tender grape’ or ‘cluster,’ the passage is rendered ‘the vines in blossom.’ So the Greek, Vulgate, Arabic, and Syriac. So the Spanish version of the Jews: Las vides dencierne dieron olor.

So also Dr. Lowth :

Et vineæ florescentes odorem diffundunt.

(7) *O! from thy clefts, thy fastnesses appear; } Soloman hav-*
Here bend thy voice, my dove! ————— } ing personi-
 fied his beloved under the character of a dove, here boldly ascribes to her the manners of this timid bird; and, secluded as she was from him, requests her to quit the shelter which the clefts of the rocks, and the caves or hollows of the precipices, to which he compares her palace of stone or marble, had afforded her. The common version, ‘secret places of the stairs,’ is erroneous; although magnificent edifices of stairs were occasionally erected in honour of the great or the renowned in eastern countries—a species of monument elevated, by the daughter of Ferdusi to the memory of her father, on the banks of the river at Tus. סדר means, however, a fastness or precipice. The mistake has obviously originated from a wish in the translators to give a literal interpretation to this highly figurative phraseology. Stairs may well enough apply to the royal fair-one as a *bride*, but not as a *dove*. This personification of animals, and the appropriation of their characters and manners to mankind, is extremely common among the Hebrew poets. Consenta-

neous with the present description is the following, in the celebrated prophecy of Balaam concerning the Kenites: Numbers xxiv. 21.

Strong is thy dwelling-place;

Thou buildest thy nest upon a rock.

And again: Habakkuk ii. 9.

Woe to him who panteth with an evil covetousness for his house,

That he may build his nest on high;

That he may be secure from the assault of evil.

Homer adopts a simile drawn from the same source in his description of the wounded Diana, which will pertinently illustrate the passage: Il. Φ. 493.

Δαμρνεσσα δ' επειτα θεα φυγεν, ὡς τε πελεια,

Ἡ ῥα θ' ὑπ' ἱρηκος κοιλην εἰσεπτατο πετρην,

Χηραμον· εἰδ' αρα τη γε ἄλωμεναι αἰσιμον ηεν.

As, when the falcon wings her way above,

To the cleft cavern speeds th' affrighted dove,

Straight to her shelter thus the goddess flew.

For the peculiar situation and construction of the garden here referred to, see note on idyl VI. (8).

(8) *Root out the foxes* —————] Foxes abounded in Judæa and Italy, and are noticed, both by sacred and profane writers, as fond of grapes, and making great havoc in the vineyards. Thus Lament. v. 17, 18.

For this our heart is faint:

Because of these things our eyes are dim:

Because of Mount Zion, which is desolate.—

The foxes run over it.

In like manner Theocritus, idyl E. 112.

Μισῶ τας δασυκερκος αλωπεκας, αἱ τὰ Μικῶνος
Αἰεὶ φοντῶσαι τὰ ποθεσπερὰ ξαγίζοντι.

I hate those brush-tailed foxes, that each night
Spoil Micon's vineyards with their deadly bite.

In the original, we have not only mention made of שועלים 'foxes,' but also of קטנים שועלים 'little foxes,' which, as is generally conjectured by the commentators, may perhaps be jackals—animals, as Mr. Harmer observes, very common, even in the present day, in Persia, and occasionally extremely troublesome and injurious to vineyards and gardens.

(9) *The sweets of lilies on his lips combine*;] 'He feedeth among the lilies:' *i.e.* 'So sweet is his breath, that, surely, he feedeth among the lilies.' So in idyl VII. (19).

Down to the gardens, where the spices bloom,
With airy feet did my beloved roam,
To feed on fragrance, and with lavish hand
Pluck the young lilies, where their snows expand.

The lily, as well on account of its beauty as its odor, has been universally admired in all ages; and the Greeks and Romans were as fond of plucking it with a lavish hand as the orientals. Thus in an epigram of Dionysius:

Εἶθε κρίνον γενομένη λευκοχρῶον, ὅφρα με χερσὶν
Αραμμένη, μάλλον σῆς χροτὸς πορρῆς.

O were the lily's lot, fair damsel! mine,
Plucked by thy fingers on thy breast to pine.

Thus also Virgil, ecl. x. 24.

Venit et agresti capitis Sylvanus honore,
Florentes ferulas et grandia lilia quassans.

Shaking the rustic honours of his brow,
The lily tall, and fennel's branching bough,
Sylvanus came.—— WARTON.

So again, Georg. iv. 130.

Hic rarum tamen in dumis olus, albaque circum
Lilia, verbenasque premens, vescumque papaver,
Regum æquabat opes animis.——
He there with scanty herbs the bushes crowned,
And planted *lilies*, vervain, poppies round,
Nor envied kings. SOTHEBY.

(¹⁰) *Till breathe the morning*, —————] עַר שִׁפּוֹחַ
הַיּוֹם. In the Septuagint *διαπνευσθαι*, and in the Vulgate, ac-
curately, *aspiret*. The expression is truly elegant and
poetical. At midnight all nature lies *dead* and *lifeless*, and

—not a *breath* disturbs the deep serene.

‘The shadows,’ however, at length ‘fly; the morning
breathes,’ and nature revivifies.—The idea expressed by
Milton is in perfect accordance, but perhaps less forcible:
Par. Lost, iv. 641.

Sweet is the ‘breath of morn.’

The intrinsic excellence of the metaphor has seldom been
understood by our commentators, who have almost all of
them referred it to the *day-breeze* of the country, or, at
least, to that peculiar current of air which is often found
existing in most climates at the dawn. The common ver-
sion, ‘Till the day break,’ is less poetical still, and alto-
gether untrue to the spirit of the original. Duport is yet
more unhappy, and deviates widely from his general ele-
gance.

Dum dies atras fuget ortus umbras,
Chare mi, cura redeas —————

NOTES ON IDYL IV.

(¹) *And anxious dreams* ———] The word 'dream' does not occur in the original; but, from the period of time, the place, and position of the fair bride, there can be no doubt that she is here describing a dream. In the earlier ages of the world, in which visions of the night were made the medium of divine communication, as well to those who were without the pale of the Jewish hierarchy as to those whom it embraced, dreams were pondered upon with far more deference than at present; and for this reason the images in natural sleep appear to have been often more vivid and permanent. Much of the beauty of ancient poetry, therefore, both sacred and prophane, has been exhausted in delineating the history of individual dreams. In the sacred scriptures this is so frequent as to render it useless to enumerate instances. In Virgil, Moschus, and Bion, we meet with many similar narratives; but the Odes of Anacreon are, of all specimens of poetry, the nearest perhaps in this respect to the idyls before us. The third and eighth, in the arrangement of Barnes's edition, are both of this description most precisely: and the former, in its general tale and construction, so extremely resembles the seventh of the present idyls, that the reader will find it introduced under the poem for a comparison. Gessner has happily referred to this species of poetic fiction in his idyl entitled *Daphnis*. The delighted swain applies to heaven, and supplicates that *dreams of love and of himself* may descend on the fair idol of his heart. And, if she do not dream of him, his object, at least, is obtained by the supplication:

for when the morning arose, and his beloved appeared at her window—holdselig grüsst sie ihn, und holdselig blickt sie ihn nach;—denn sie hatte seinen nächtlichen gesang behorcht:—“tenderly she saluted him, tenderly her eyes still followed his footsteps;—for she had listened to his mid-night song.”

(2) *Intent I sought him—but I sought in vain.*] This lineal iteration, chorus, or intercalary verse, as it is called by Dr. Lowth, is in perfect unison with the true spirit of the idyl or eclogue. Theocritus is full of the same figure: his very first idyl affords us an instance of it—

Ἀρχετε βαρκολικαί, Μωσαι φίλαι, ἀρχετ' αἰοῖδας·

which is repeated at the commencement of every sentence, till the poet has nearly finished his song.

The first idyl of Bion, in like manner, offers us a similar instance—

Λιὰζω τοῖ Αἰῶνι· Ἀπώλειτο καλὸς Αἰῶνις·

the latter part of the verse being in a small degree, and wit great elegance, varied in almost every recurrence.

Gessner has occasionally introduced a similar iteration, though not very frequently: the first idyl, however, furnishes us with an example in the soliloquy of Alexis, who concludes his pathetic apostrophes with “Ich sie liebe mehr als die biene den fröling liebt.” “I love her more than the bee loves the spring.”

The lyrists of every country, both sacred and profane, have been as attentive to this beauty as the pastoral poets. It occurs in a great variety of the Psalms, and other poetical parts of the Bible; and the reader may also turn to Anacreon, ode xxxi, in which the burden is—

Θελω, θελω μαινεσθαι.

The gazels of the Asiatics are often composed with the same spirited figure.—In a paper on the resemblances of Grecian and oriental poetry, which I some time ago inserted in the Monthly Magazine, I gave an instance of it from one of the gazels of Hafiz. The following—To an unknown Fair, from Khakani—will afford the reader another example.

لعل رخا سېن برا سروروان کيستي
 سنکدلا ستېکرا افت جان کيستي
 سروقد تو دیده ام آه الف کشیده

ام
 نرکس دیده ام روح روان کيستي
 از چپن که رسته نرکس سر بسته
 قدر شکر شکستند غنچه دهان کيستي
 دام نهاده بروي مست زباده ميروي
 شت کشاده بري سخت کيان
 کيستي

ابروي تو چو ماه نو برده زماه تو
 کرو

آفت جا نېن شنو قتنه جان کيستي
 خاقانی غلام تو مست شده زجام تو
 جان بدهم بنام تو روح روان کيستي

Who art thou?—say:—with cypress shape,
 Soft, jasmine neck, but flinty heart:
 Tyrant! from whom 'tis vain to escape —
 O tell me who thou art?

I've seen thy bright narcissus-eye,
 Thy form no cypress can impart:
 Queen of my soul!—I've heard thee sigh—
 O tell me who thou art?

Through vales with hyacinths bespread
 I've sought thee, trembling as the hart:
 O rose-bud-lip'd! thy sweets were fled—
 Tell, tell me who thou art?

Wine lights thy cheeks; thy steps are snares;
 Thy glance a sure destructive dart:
 Say, as its despot-aim it bears,
 What fatal bow thou art?

Thy new-moon brow the full moon robs,
 And bids its fading beams depart:—
 Tell, thou, for whom each bosom throbs,
 What torturer thou art?

Drunk with the wine thy charms display,
 Thy slave Khakani hails his smart:
 I'd die to know thy name!—then say
 What deity thou art?

(5) *Daughters of Salem born!—by all ye prize,*] In the dissertation I have just referred to on the resemblances of Grecian and oriental poetry, I have divided the graceful figure of iteration, which we meet with equally in each, into the three classes of—verbal or literal iteration, or alliteration, as it is

commonly called; lineal iteration, upon which I have now commented; and periodic iteration, or the repetition of a longer sentence than a single verse, and of which we meet with an instance in the present and three ensuing lines; which constitute together a kind of general chorus, or burden for the whole diwan or fasciculus of idyls, of which the ‘Song of Songs’ consists; and which also, contrary to the opinion of signior Melesigenio, evidently proves its unity and mutual dependance. The burden, or periodic iteration before us, is repeated from the termination of idyl II, and once more recurs at the close of idyl X. Among the sacred poets the periodic iteration appears to have been in greatest favour with the psalmist, who is perpetually resorting to it; and among those of Rome it has been principally employed, in conjunction with the two former varieties of the same figure, by Lucretius. The exquisite opening of his fourth book—

Avia Pieridum peragro loca nullius ante, &c.

—throughout the whole course of the first twenty-five lines, is a mere repetition of the same number of lines commencing at b. i. v. 925. And there are many other passages, some of them even of greater length, in the same manner iterated in different parts of his unrivalled poem: several of them, indeed, not less than three or four times.

While correcting the proof sheet of this note, the beautiful Italian version of Melesigenio is put into my hands; and I find the intercalary verse here referred to introduced and preserved with much spirit. The passage opens as follows:

L'ho cercato nel mio letto
 Di gran notte il mio diletto;
 L'ho cercato,
 Ma trovato—non ve l'ho.

I also find that Dr. Hodgson's elegant interpretation of idyl II. 16, respecting the 'beams of cedar' and 'rafters of fir,' is here adopted with a singular parallelism of thought:

Il molle erboso
 Suol d'un pratello
 E nostro letto ;
 Son nostro tetto
 Fronzuti e lieti
 Cedri ed abeti,
 Che vago ostello
 Sembran formar.

Longpierre has quoted an ancient and anonymous epigram so perfectly correspondent with the idyl before us, excepting that the research of the devious lover is not crowned with the same success, that I cannot avoid citing it, nor conceiving that the idea was suggested by this beautiful passage in the 'Song of Songs.'

Lecto compositus, vix prima silentia noctis
 Carpebam, et somno lumina victa dabam:
 Cum me sævus Amor presum, sursumque capillis
 Excitat, et lacerum pervigilare jubet.
 "Tu famulus meus (inquit) ames cum mille puellas,
 Solus, Io, solus, dure jacere potes?"
 Exilio; et pedibus nudis, tunicaque soluta,
 Omne iter impedio, nullum iter expedio.
 Nunc propero, nunc ire piget; rursumque redire
 Pœnitet; et pudor est stare via media.
 Ecce tacent voces hominum, strepitusque ferarum,
 Et volucrum cantus, turbaque fida canum.
 Solus ego, ex cunctis paveo somnumque, torumque,
 Et sequor imperium, sæve Cupido, tuum.

In bed reclined, the first repose of night
 Scarce had I snatched, and closed my conquered eyes,
 When Love surprised me, and, with cruel might,
 Seized by the hair, and forced me straight to rise.
 "What! shall the man whom countless damsels fire,
 Thus void (said he) of pity, sleep alone?"—
 I rise bare-footed, and, in loose attire,
 Block up each avenue, but traverse none.
 Now rush I headlong—homeward now retreat—
 Again rush headlong, and each effort try;
 Ashamed at heart to loiter in the street,
 Yet in my heart still wanting power to fly.
 Lo! man is hushed—the beasts forbear to roar;
 The birds to sing, the faithful dog to bark—
 I, I alone the loss of bed deplore,
 Tyrannic Love pursuing through the dark.

The second idyl of Moschus is constructed upon precisely the same plan. It thus opens most beautifully:

Ευρωπή ποτε Κυπρίς ἐπὶ γλυκύν ἦκεν ονειρόν
 Νυκτὸς ὅτε τρίτατον λαχὼς ἴσταται, ἐγγυθὶ δ' ἥως
 Ὑπνὸς ὅτε γλυκίων μελιτὸς βλεφαρρίσιν ἐφιζών,
 Λυσιμελὲς, πέδα μαλακὰ κατὰ φασα δέσμων,
 Εὐτε καὶ ἀτρεκέων παιμαινέται ἐθνὸς ονειρῶν.

Nigh was the dawn, the night had nearly fled,
 When a soft dream approach'd Europa's bed;
 'Twas Venus sent it:—honey from the cell
 Not sweeter flows than flowed the sleep that fell:
 Loose lay her limbs, her lids with silk were bound,
 And fancy's truest phantoms hover'd round.

NOTES ON IDYL V.

(¹) *Lo! what is this, ————*] I read with Dr. Percy and Mr. Green, ‘what’ instead of ‘who,’ as it occurs in the common version. For this change the latter expositor has thought it necessary to apologize; and has ingeniously endeavoured to trace out the means by which the pronoun מַה (*what*), as he conjectures it was originally written, became vitiated into מִי (*who*). But such ingenuity is unnecessary: for מִי signifies ‘what’ as well as ‘who;’ and is thus elegantly rendered by Mr. Green himself in another passage. Deut. xxxiii. 29.

Happy art thou, O Israel!—*what* nation is like to thee,
O people saved by Jehovah,
Who is a shield for thy protection,
And a sword for thy advancement!

کي *who*, in Persian, is occasionally used in the same manner for چي ‘*what*.’

(²) ———— *in clouds of fragrant gums.*] Thus Homer, in his description of Jupiter on Mount Gargarus, ll. xv. 153.

——— Ἀμφὶ δὲ μιν θυόεν νεφὸς ἐστεφάνωτο.

——— Veiled in a fragrant cloud.

(³) *That from the wilderness ————*] “From the course or direction of the wilderness.” See note on idyl XI. 1.

(+) *Behold the couch* —————] In our common version ‘Behold his bed:’ supposed by Dr. Percy to be the nuptial bed, intended as a present to his beloved bride. Mr. Green, following a suggestion of the same translator, renders it ‘Behold his pavilion—the bridal pavilion of Solomon.’ It is not easy to conceive the meaning of such a version. The intention of the poet, however, is plain and obvious; and Mr. Harmer evinces his usual accuracy in interpreting this מטה or אפריון (which latter is the word here used, and is to be found no where else in the Bible) by the eastern term ‘a palanquin.’ Melesigenio translates it in the same manner—*Il palanchin reale*. The mode of travelling, or taking the air in a couch, litter, or vehicle of this name, supported upon the shoulders of slaves or servants, is extremely common all over the east at the present day, and is unquestionably of immemorial date. These palanquins are often of most elegant and superb manufacture, as well as most voluptuously soft and easy. Of this description was the couch or palanquin before us. There can be no doubt that it was a vehicle built in celebration of the royal nuptials; and of its magnificence we may form some idea from the present description. Escorted by a chosen band of warriors, and veiled in this rich and fragrant vehicle, in all the style of oriental splendor, the enamoured monarch pays a visit to the beloved of his bosom. The oriental poets still allude to this *aerial excursion*, as they denominate it, in many of their effusions. Thus in the *Pend-nameh* of Atthar, in which the bird referred to is the nightingale :

چو کل سوار شود بر هوا سلیمان وار
سحر که مرغ درآید بنغمه داود

When, like SOLOMAN, the rose
 In her car aerial floats,
 The bird his song will soon compose
 That vies with DAVID's dulcet notes.

(5) *Each, o'er his thigh, with tempered sword begirt.*] 'They are all bearers of swords, being expert in war.' In the common version 'They all hold swords.' This is obviously inaccurate: for in the next member of the verse we are expressly told, that their swords were undrawn, and girt upon their thighs. "I am inclined to think," says Dr. Hodgson, "that כלם אחוזי חרב does not mean 'they all hold swords;' but holders, possessors of swords; that is, warriors. Thus רעה צאן, though literally 'feeding sheep,' means a 'feeder of sheep.'" Gen. iv. 2.

(6) *And o'er the down*—————] מרכב, the downy seat or couch of the palanquin.

(7) ————— *a broidered vest is thrown* } I have given
~~Worked by the fair~~————— } the version of Houbigant, who is followed by several of the translators. The passage is however doubtful; though the common rendering is certainly erroneous: it may, nevertheless, be easily corrected into 'the middle thereof is wrought, as a proof of their love, by the daughters of Jerusalem.'

Among the Asiatics at an early period of the world, and particularly among the Hebrew ladies, the arts of tapestry and embroidery were carried to a very high degree of perfection; concerning which the reader may consult a succession of entertaining memoirs by M. Ameilhon, inserted in the first and second volumes of the Memoirs of the National Institute of

France; Lit. et Beaux Arts; and entitled *Recherches sur les Couleurs des Anciens, et sur les Arts qui y ont rapport.*

Mrs. Francis has an illustration of this more common rendering so elegant and ingenious, that the reader cannot but be pleased with it. "A Turkish couch," says she, "according to lady M. W. Montague, is made of *wooden lattices*, painted and gilded :—Soloman's carriage of the *wood* of Lebanon, its pillars of *silver*. The inside of the Turkish couch was painted with baskets of flowers and nosegays, intermixed with *little mottoes*, according to the fancy of the artist: the midst of Soloman's was *paved with love* by the skilful daughters of Jerusalem: *i. e.* with a rich beautiful sort of tapestry, curiously wrought with the needle, where flowers of different kinds, and various colours, mixed with, and surrounded, *short sentences expressing the power of love*, and the warmth and animation of that passion which a young bridegroom entertains for a fair, beautiful, and virtuous bride. Here was an ample field for the daughters of Jerusalem to display their genius, and their skill in needle-work. See Judges v. 20. Prov. xxxi. 22—24. The covering of this vehicle was of purple; that of the Turkish couch of scarlet cloth, lined with silk, richly embroidered and fringed."

I can by no means accede to the opinion or the version of signior Melesigenio, who conceives the whole of this description to be a kind of pastoral ode of Soloman, not referring either to himself or his own bride, but to some imaginary shepherdess on the point of her nuptials, whom he represents as being placed in this bridal car herself; and whom her lover, in consequence of her extreme beauty and the ornaments with which she is decorated on the occasion, with an amorous image of eastern taste—*un' amorosa immagine di gusto*

orientale—compares to the bride of Solomon conducted to her nuptial bed with actual and royal pomp:

Porpora il mezza ammanta, ove la bella
S'adagia, che prescelta amor e prima
Fra le belle di Solima sublima.

He may well commence his note 'Credo, ma forse pochi persuaderonne,' &c. 'I believe, but perhaps few will persuade themselves to believe the same,' &c.

(8) *Crowned with the crown which, o'er the royal spouse,]*
"It was usual with many nations to put crowns or garlands on the heads of new-married persons. The Misnah informs us that this custom prevailed among the Jews; and it should seem from the passage before us, that the ceremony of putting it on was performed by one of the parents. Among the Greeks the bride was crowned by her mother, as appears from the instance of Iphigenia in Euripides, v. 993. Bochart supposes this the nuptial crown and other ornaments of a bride, alluded to in Ezek. xvi. 8—12. Geogr. Sacr. p. 2, l. 1.—The nuptial crowns used among the Greeks and Romans were only chaplets of leaves or flowers. Among the Hebrews they were not only of these, but also occasionally of richer materials, as gold or silver, according to the rank or wealth of the parties. See Selden's *Uxor Hebraica*, lib. ii. c. 15. The original word used in the text is צִטְרֵה (derived from צָטַר *circumcinxit, circumterit*), which is the same used to express a kingly crown in 2 Sam. xii. 30. 1 Chron. xx. 2; and is often described to be of gold, Esth. viii. 15. Psalm xxi. 4; but appears to have been worn by those who were no kings, Job xix. 9, and was probably often composed of less valuable materials; as of enamel-

led work, also of roses, myrtle, and olive-leaves. Vide Selden." Dr. Percy's Translation of the Song of Solomon.—'This note is so completely pertinent and explicit, that I shall abstain from enlarging on the subject, excepting by the addition of this single observation, that it was customary equally among the Greeks and orientals to wear crowns or garlands of different degrees of value, in proportion to the rank of the person presenting them, on festivals of every description; but that those prepared for the celebration of a nuptial banquet, as being a festivity of the first consequence, were of peculiar splendor and magnificence. The Italian translator, still adhering to the idea that Solomon is here describing some imaginary shepherd and shepherdess alone, is compelled to understand the term *crown* in a metaphorical sense, and therefore renders it *col serto florido*, 'with a garland of flowers.'

(9) ————— *beneath thy shadowy hair.*] Literally 'beneath their veil,' מַבְעַד; and is so rendered by M. Michaëlis, as it is (not widely different) in Dr. Percy's translation, 'now thy veil is removed.' I believe the common version to be unnecessarily deviated from in this instance, and have therefore adhered to it. The veil referred to is that of her tresses. The eye here described, and especially when compared with the delineation in idyl V. 65, seems to comprise an equal mixture of majesty and tenderness—a combination of the liquid eye of Venus and the radiance of that of Minerva: Anacr. od. xxviii.

Ἄμα γλαυκεν ὡς Ἀθηνῆς·

Ἄμα δ' ὕγρον ὡς Κυθήνης·

In the language of the elegant Italian translator of Lucretius, Marchetti:

————— umidi
Tremuli e lascivetti.

Moist, sportive, tremulous.

A version, however, he seems to have borrowed from the following of Tasso, in his delineation of Armida:

Qual raggio in onda le scintilla un riso,
Negli umidi occhi, tremulo e lascivo.

(¹⁰) *Fine as the goats of Gilead are thy locks;*] The hair of the oriental goat is well known to be possessed of the fineness of the most delicate silk, and is often employed in modern times for the manufacture of muffs, which are vulgarly said to be composed of the beard of this animal.—Dr. Lowth imagines the colour of the hair to be here also referred to, as well as its fineness and splendor. “Caprarum pili,” says he, “erant molles, nitidi, fulvi, sponsæ capillis concolores.”

(¹¹) ————— *and each his mate has found.*] ‘And none is bereaved among them.’ I have followed Le Clerc and Lowth in rendering שְׁכֵלִים מְתַאֲמֹת simply *twins*—omnes inter se *gemellæ*; and שְׁבִלָה (*orba*) ‘bereaved’ or ‘deprived of its fellow.’ Thus Hosea xiii. 8.: אֶפְגֹּשֶׁם כְּדֹב שְׁכֹל—‘I will meet them as a bear *bereaved* of her whelps.’ The sheep of the east are peculiarly fertile; and their very name צֹאן is derived from this circumstance.

(¹²) *Thy lips are ruby silk* —————] Many of these images may be agreeably compared with the following delineation of the beautiful Rádhá, by Jayadéva: “Thy lips, O thou most beautiful among women! are a Bandhujiva flower; the lustre of the madhuçā beams on thy cheek; thine eye out-

shines the blue lotos; thy nose is a bud of the tila; the cunda-blossom yields to thy teeth. Surely thou descendest from heaven, O slender damsel! attended by a company of youthful goddesses; and all their beauties are collected in thee."

(¹³) *Beneath thy fragrant tresses, as they flow*] The hair among the ladies of Persia is still suffered to fall loosely over the forehead and cheeks, and is generally perfumed with the most exquisite essences. Hence Hafiz, in the first gazel of his diwan, thus expresses himself of the beautiful Shákhi Nebât:

ببوی نازم کاخِ صبا زان طره بکشاید
ز تاب جعد مشکینش چم خون
افتاد در دلها

From that bright forehead what perfumes
Shall load the Zephyr's wing!
What blood through all our fluttering hearts
These musky locks shall fling!

And again in gazel iii, under the same letter:

در سر زلف ندانم چم سودا داری
کاز برهم زده کیسوی مشک افشانرا

What heart those victor-locks would sway
My bosom fain would know;
That thus, dishevelled to the day,
In musky pomp they flow?

(¹⁴) *O'er thy fair cheeks pomegranate blossoms blow.*] In the common version the word 'cheek' is inaccurately rendered

'temples.' 'Blossom' or 'flower of the pomegranate' is the elegant version of Castellus. I have preferred it, as being more picturesque and equally true to the original. The more received interpretation, however, 'as a section of the pomegranate' is not destitute of beauty; and the intermixed streaks, or shades of red and white, blushing into each other, which occur in the fruit of this superb plant, may remind us of the following verse of Taygetus:

Quæ lac atque rosas vincis candore rubenti.

Whose reddening white mocks roses steeped in milk.

The fruit itself, apparently with a reference to the received opinion respecting the text before us, is thus picturesquely described by the unrivalled bard of the Tagus. *Lusiad*. Cant. ix. 59.

Abrea Roma, mostrando a rubicunda
Cor, com que tu rubi! teu preço perdes;
Entre os braços do ultimo està a jocunda
Vide co hûs cachos, roxos, e outros verdes.

————— the pomegranate of orange hue,
Whose *open heart* a brighter red displays
Than that which sparkles in the ruby's blaze.

MICKLE.

(15) *Gleams like the tower of David o'er the waste,*] This elegant building was situate on Mount Zion—"aloft on whose uttermost angle," says Sandys iii. 137, "stood the tower of David, whose ruins are yet extant, of a wonderful strength and admirable beauty, adorned with shields and the arms of the mighty." The graceful neck of the fair bride is compared

to this consummate structure; and the radiance of the jewels that surrounded it to the splendor of the arms and shields with which the tower of David was adorned. The simile is exquisite, and requires no comment.

Tasso describes the same building, or a scion from its ruins, possessing the same name, in the following verses. *Gerus. Liber. xix. 39.*

Ma intanto Soliman ver la gran torre
Ito se n' è, che di David s'appella:
E què fa de' guerrier l'avanzo accorre,
E sbarra intorno, e questa strada e quella.

Straight to the tower that David's name retains
The vanquished Soliman each effort strains;
There plants the troops that first accost his sight,
Blocks up each entrance, and prolongs the fight.

(¹⁶) *Peeps, clad in dun, a young and timid roe.*] The whole description is inimitably beautiful and delicate; but it has not hitherto been perfectly understood by the commentators, who have supposed the entire breast to be represented by the roe alone, instead of the elegant and prominent nipple, with its dun-coloured areola. Thus Melesigenio:

Balzano simili
Coteste due
Mammelle tue
A due novelli
D'un parto figli
Dainetti belli,
Che insiem fra' gigli
Pascendo van.

The breast itself is obviously the bed of lilies, in which the young roe, or rather the fawn of the roe, is feeding; and through which its fearful and tremulous face seems to peep.

The same image occurs in the following of Jayadéva, in which a dark spot upon the clear *bosom* of the moon is compared to this very animal. "The moon, with a black fawn couched on its disc, advanced in its nightly course." And again shortly afterwards, "Black as the young antelope on the lunar orb."

No translation, however, can in any degree vie with the curious felicity of the original: in which, as it is elegantly observed by Dr. Lowth, the word צִרִי, here rendered 'roe' or 'fawn,' signifies 'loveliness' in general. The immediate species of roe here referred to is, as I have already observed, conjectured by sir William Jones to be the gazel of the Arabians; concerning which see note on idyl II. (¹⁶). We learn from Matt. vi. 28, that in Syria the lilies grew common in the fields, and that they were of incomparable beauty.

There is a surprising resemblance between this admirable and delicate delineation, and the well-known couplet of Fletcher, which affords us perhaps the only rival comparison to be met with in ancient or modern poetry:

Hide, O hide those *hills of snow*.

Whereon the *mountain-pink* doth grow!

This beautiful imagery of the English bard is not, however, confined to Europe: the orientals were in possession of it before ourselves; though it was unquestionably original to Fletcher; and he is therefore entitled to the full merit of it. In the songs of the inimitable Jayadéva, the companions of the heavenly

Rádhá thus address her:—"Ask those two round *hillocks* which receive pure dew-drops from the garland playing on thy neck, and the *buds on whose top* start aloft with the thought of thy darling—ask, and they will tell that thy soul is intent on the warfare of love." Thus again in the same exquisite poem—"May that Heri be your support, who, removing the lucid veil from the bosom of Pedmá, and fixing his eyes on the *delicious buds* that grew on it—" &c.

(17) ———— *o'er those balmy mountains will I lie.*] 'I will betake me to *these* mountains of myrrhe,' &c. In the common version, and indeed in all the versions I have yet met with, it is 'I will betake me to *the* mountain,' &c.; and the general explanation is, that the *entire person* of the royal bride is hereby compared to a mass or heap of these precious perfumes. There is far more spirit, however, and no deviation from the original, in considering the compliment as applied to her lovely bosom alone—to those mountains of fragrant lilies over which the young and timid fawn was barely seen to peep.

(18) ———— *thy beauteous frame* } Hafiz most gal-
Is spotless all—a finish free from blame. } lantly begins
 one of his gazels with the very same idea :

ای همه شکل تو مطبوع و همه جای
 تو خوش
 دام از عشوه شیرین شکر خای تو
 خوش

هېچو کلبړک طري بوده وجود تو
لطيف

هېچو سروچمن جلد سراپاي تو خوش

Yes—in thy lovely form perfection meets ;
My heart is ravished with its honied sweets ;
Mild as the rose that drinks the vernal air,
And, through each part, as Eden's cypress fair.

NOTES ON IYDL VI.

(¹) *Let dreams or dangers menace as they may,*] To an ear not accustomed to the sudden transitions of oriental poetry, the original begins with great abruptness. It pre-supposes that the royal bride had been relating to her enamoured monarch some anecdote or tale of alarm; and not improbably some such dream as occurs in idyl IV, or idyl VII: and the commencement of his speech is in answer to it. The summits of the mountains, mentioned in the text, were inhabited by wild beasts. Le Roque, in his description of Lebanon, expressly asserts that there were many tigers and bears on that mountain: and Russel informs us that the lion is found on the banks of the Euphrates, betwixt Bagdat and Bassorah. By this forcible appeal the royal speaker invites his beloved to his arms, as to a place of safety; and encourages her to look towards him for security amidst any dangers, either actual or imaginary, of which she might be apprehensive. Melesigenio however gives an interpretation somewhat different. He commences his present *song* with the two last lines of the foregoing idyl (ch. iv. 7, of the Bible version); and then supposes that his imaginary shepherd addresses his shepherdess, whom he represents as feeding her flock of sportive kids on Mount Lebanon, in the terms that follow:

Deh, da coteste, o sposa
 Di Libano scosceso erme pendici
 Meco deh vieni, meco. Il pie non tarde
 A me deh volgi, e'l guardo

Dai gioghi d' esto Amana,
Sannire aspro, &c.

This however seems an explanation, in equal opposition to the natural history of the mountains referred to, and the obvious intention of the poet himself.

Mr. Harmer, with many others, who contend that the fair subject of the address was the daughter of Pharaoh, and who would wish to interpret the passage as a literal description of her journey from Egypt to Jerusalem, find no small degree of perplexity in this passage. She could not pass over all these mountains, let her course lie in whatever direction it might; and her immediate route ought to have been over none of them. They therefore relinquish the historic meaning entirely, and confine it to its sacred or esoteric reference.

(2) ————— *my sister-spouse!* —————] Such is the literal and endearing term in the original; the pronoun 'my' between the two substantives being a useless interpolation of the versions. "Sister," observes the ingenious bishop of Dromore, "is either used here as a term of endearment, as it is by some understood Prov. vii. 4; and Apocrypha, xv. 8. in which, by a similar figure, Ahasuerus calls himself the *brother* of Esther; or else it denotes that the bride was related to the royal bridegroom, or at least of the same tribe with him. The Hebrews used the words 'brother' and 'sister' to express any, even the most remote degree of consanguinity."

Closely attentive to the language and costume of the sacred scriptures, Racine introduces Ahasuerus as employing in his address to Esther this very term, in his drama that bears her name: Acte ii. sc. vii.

Esther! que craignez-vous? suis-je pas vôtre frère?

Est-ce pour vous qu'est fait un ordre si sévère?—

Ne connoissez-vous pas la voix de vôtre époux?

Encore un coup, vivez, et revenez à vous.

Why fears my love? thy brother am I not?

Can such decree molest my Esther's lot?—

Knows, then, thine ear a husband's voice no more?—

O be thyself! this wild distrust give o'er.

(3) *Thine eye but glances,*—————] The common version has literally rendered this passage as it occurs in the ordinary copies of the original—"Thou hast ravished my heart *with one* of thine eyes." No critic, however, has been satisfied with this ordinary lection of the Hebrew; it being rather ludicrous, as Dr. Hodgson has observed, to say that she had ravished his heart with *one* eye. Dr. Percy has elegantly supplied the word ראי 'glance' after באחד, his version being 'with one *glance* of thine eye;' while that of Melesigenio is 'with *each* of thine eyes'—*coll' un, coll' altro occhietto*. The Massorites themselves, sensible that the construction was ungrammatical, have proposed an emendation in the margin—באחת for באחד — עין being of the feminine gender. The valuable labours of Dr. Kennicott, however, have completely solved the difficulty, and put us into possession of the true meaning; for in eighteen of the collated copies, instead of the imperfect term באחד, we find it actually written, as the Massorites had suspected, or at least amended it, באחת 'at once,' instead of 'one of.'—"Thou hast ravished my heart *at once* with thine eyes"—instantly, abruptly, with a single glance.

Mrs. Francis, nevertheless, has adhered to the common

reading, and has rendered it with all the elegance of which it is capable—

From *one bright* eye a piercing dart
Elanced, has vanquished all my heart.

The luxurious Jayadéva has a similar image: "I meditate on her delightful embrace, on the ravishing glances darted from her eye." And more closely still in the following passage: "Deign to embrace thy slave, who acknowledges himself bought by thee, *by a single glance* from thine eye, and a toss of thy disdainful brow."

So in a poem in modern Persian, quoted by sir William Jones, on the well-known loves of Mejnùn and Laili:

An ceh dil bordah zi Mejnùn bi nigah
Beh berem zúd biyaver hemráh.

Bring speedily with thee to my presence her who has
stolen the heart of Mejnùn *with a glance*.

(⁴) *Thy graceful neck subdues me as it turns.*] The word ענק here translated 'turn,' signifies 'a turn' or 'turning round,' 'a spire,' 'a round itself,' or 'circle,' and hence a 'clasp' or 'chain.' Its meaning in this place has been therefore variously understood by different interpreters. Mr. Green, copying the Vulgate, renders it 'with one *ringlet* of thy neck;' and he is followed by Melesigenio, who explains the Hebrew term by '*i capelli intorno al collo e sul seno.*' In the common version it occurs 'with one chain of thy neck.' Dr. Hodgson, transmuting the word באחד into באחת writes 'at once with the chain round thy neck;' an elegant lection, but which seems to require authority for the alteration he

necessarily introduces into the original. I have adopted the ingenious version of the bishop of Dromore, which is equally elegant with that of Dr. Hodgson, and as much more spirited as it is more consistent with the original. The Hebrew עֲנַן is equivalent to the Arabic زوبت which is often used in the sense here adopted.

The following passage of Horace, presenting a parallel idea, is curiously happy in illustrating the reading contended for. Lib. ii. ode 12.

Num tu, quæ tenuit dives Achæmenes,
Aut pinguis Phrygiæ Mygdonias opes,
Permutare velis crine Liciniæ,
Plenas aut Arabum domos—
Dum fragrantia *detorquet* ad oscula
Cervicem? —————

But wouldst thou for all Persia's hoard,
For all Mygdonia's plains afford,
Or Kedar's balmy bliss,
Wouldst thou Licinia's tresses spurn
When once *her neck with graceful turn*
Concedes the fragrant kiss?

(5) *Thy lips with dropping honey-combs are hung,*] A bold and expressive figure, and equally common to Greeks and Orientals. Thus Homer, Iliad A. 249.

Τὸ καὶ ἀπο γλωσσης μελιτος γλυκιων ῥεεν αὐδῆ.

Words sweet as honey from his lips distilled.

In like manner Moschus, in his description of Cupid, idyl A. 8.

—————Κακαὶ φρενες, ἄδυ λαλῆμα·
Οὐ γὰρ ἴσον νοεῖ καὶ φθεγγεται· ὡς μέλι, φωνα.

A wretch unfeeling, yet his tale is sweet,
His tongue is honey, but his heart deceit.

The Proverbs furnish us with the very same description of an immoral woman, ch. v. 3.

The lips of a strange woman drop as a honey-comb,
And her mouth is smother than oil;
But her end is bitter as wormwood,
Sharp as a two-edged sword.

So Milton in his description of Belial: Par. Lost, ii. 112.

————— his tongue
Dropped manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason.

In the second gazel of Hafiz, under the letter, |, we meet with the following elegant verse:

جواب تلخ میزید لب لعل سکرخوارا

But should those lips the scorpion's venom fill,
Those ruby lips whence honied sweets distill?

See also another instance from the same exquisite bard in note on idyl ix. 29.

The following idea is derived from the same source, or is

rather only a varied ramification from the same radix. The reader will find it in Stäudlin's ode to Sappho, band i. 54.

Eine seele rann mit honigsüsse,
Zärtliche! aus jedem deiner küsse!
Der umarmung wonne schien dein wesen
G!ühend aufzulösen.

Through all his soul pure honey flowed,
Voluptuous fair! with every kiss;
Nor less thyself with rapture glowed,
Dissolved beneath th' ecstatic bliss.

Not widely different the repentant Mádhava to the angelic Rádhá: "O grant me a draught of honey from the lotos of thy mouth." Songs of Jayadéva.

(6) *Milk, milk and honey* —————] Even this combination of figures occurs also occasionally among the poets of Greece. Thus Theocritus, idyl K. 26.

Το στομα γαλακτος γλυκερωτερον· εκ στοματων δε
Ερρεε μοι φωνα γλυκερωτερα η μελικηρω.

More sweet her lips than *milk* in luscious rills—
Lips, whence pure *honey*, as she speaks, distills

Guarini has a similar idea in the following verses of his Pastor Fido:

Col latte, il latte avviva,
E col dolce dell' api
Condisce il mel de le natie dolcezze.

The *milk* that through her temper flows
 Her cleanly pail each morn bestows;
 And on her *honied* lips we see
 The genuine sweetness of the bee.

(1) *And Lebanon, in luscious odors drest,* } Mount Leba-
Pours all his incense o'er thy bridal vest. } non abounded
 with odoriferous trees of various descriptions, from which the
 most curious gums and balsams were extracted; whence some
 derive the name itself, to wit, לבונה 'frankincense.'
 And hence also Musæus:

—Λιβανθ' θυοντος ενι πτερυγεσσι.

The heights of *odorous* Lebanon.

The wardrobes of the East were plentifully perfumed with
 aromatics. Thus the Psalmist, xlv. 8.

All thy garments out of ivory wardrobes, perfumed
 With myrrh, aloes, and cassia, delight thee with their
 fragrance.

With robes thus enriched, Rebecca furnished her son Jacob,
 when she sent him to obtain by stratagem his father's blessing.
 Gen. xxvii. 27.

Then Isaac, smelling the fragrance of Jacob's raiment,
 blessed him, saying,
 Behold! the fragrance of my son is as the fragrance of a
 field
 Which Jehovah hath blessed.

The same idea occurs with so much exactitude in Moschus, that I cannot forbear quoting it: Idyl B. 91.

————— τε αμξροτος οδμη
Τηλοθι και λειμωνος εκαινυτο λαρον αυτημην.

Whose heavenly fragrance far exceeds
The fragrance of the breathing meads.

It was hence figuratively applied to the moral qualities of the mind, as in Idyl I. p. 2 of the book before us.

Like the fragrance of thy own sweet perfumes is thy name.

Thus probably alluded to by the learned author of the *Sucardán* :

ما احلي بالافواه ذكرك

How sweet thy fragrance to th' enchanted tongue !

Stript of its poetic figure, “ How *sweet* the remembrance and discussion of thy virtues ! ”

The phrase, as sir William Jones has observed upon this very verse of the Persian bard, is not uncommon in modern language. Thus the elegant Gessner in his *Death of Abel* : “ *Blühe empor, wie die junge blum' im frühling empor blühet; dein leben sey ein süsser geruch vor dem Herren.* ” “ Arise and blossom as blossom the young buds in the spring ; may thy life be a sweet-smelling *savour* before the Lord ! ” — So Clarendon, among ourselves. “ By her intercession with the king, she would lay a most seasonable and popular obligation upon the whole nation, and leave behind her a *pleasant*

odor of her grace and favor to the people." The Chinese have a symbol named Hiang, which in its primary sense means *odor*, or *perfume*, and in its secondary *fame* or *virtue*.

(⁸) ————— *a fountain fresh and sealed*;] In the Septuagint, πηγή εσφραγισμένη. The whole of these seem to have been established metaphors, applied by the Hebrews upon nuptial occasions, to signify the unsullied purity of the bride, and the chastity and reserve she was to evince in the marriage-state. Among the Jews, at this day, the bridegroom before consummation puts up a prayer to God, in which is this petition—"Suffer not a stranger to enter into the SEALED FOUNTAIN, that the servant of our loves (the bride) may keep the seed of holiness and purity, and may not be barren." Addison's Pres. State of the Jews, ch. v. Selden's Uxor Hebraica, iii. 2. Dr. Percy's Translation of Soloman's Song.

"The first place that we directed our course to," says Mr. Maundrell, in his Account of Bethlehem and its Vicinity, (April 1, 1696) was those famous fountains, pools, and gardens, which were the contrivance and delight of king Soloman, alluded to Eccles. ii. 5, 6. About the distance of an hundred and forty paces from these pools is the FOUNTAIN from which they principally derive their waters. This the friars told us was the SEALED FOUNTAIN, to which the HOLY SPOUSE is compared, Cant. iv. 12.; and they pretend a tradition that king Soloman SHUT UP THESE SPRINGS and kept the door of them SEALED with his SIGNET, to preserve the waters for his own drinking, in their natural freshness and purity. Nor was it difficult thus to secure them, they rising under ground, and having no avenue to them but a little hole, like the mouth

of a narrow well. These waters wind along through two rooms cut out of the solid rock, which are arched over with stone arches, very ancient, perhaps the work of Solomon himself. Below the pool runs down a *narrow, rocky valley, inclosed on both sides with high mountains*; this, they told us, was the INCLOSED GARDEN alluded to in the same song." *Travels*, p. 87.

(9) *A paradise of plants* —————] In the Septuagint, which the present version follows, *παράδεισος* (*paradisus*). The Hebrew, however, is a term somewhat more general, פֶּרֶדֶס, and like the Arabic بستان is applicable to gardens, orchards, or inclosed plantations of any kind. The comparison is not uncommon among the orientals of modern day. Thus in one of the amoretts of Mirzà Abdúlrahím of Ispahan,—agreeably to the orthography of sir William Jones, vol. i. 220.

Tore tázi ghemi hejrári dídah
Pur guli dágghí moh' abbat chídah.

He had seen the depredations of grief through absence
from a beloved object :

He had plucked many a black-spotted flower from *the*
garden of love.

So Hafiz :

که بر طرف چین زارش همیکردن چمن
ابرو

How sweet her lids, where lurks the bowyer Love,
In that fair precinct of her garden move!

(¹⁰) ———— *nard*, ————] So the Septuagint and Vulgate *ναρδος*, *nardus*. Hebr. נָרְדָּ: Concerning which the reader may consult sir William Jones's elaborate treatise upon this plant.

(¹¹) *Nārd, saffron, cinnamon, the dulcet airs*,] Thus the son of Sirach, who was a close copyist of the royal bard. Eccles. xxiv. 15.

I gave a sweet smell like the cinnamon and asphaltus ;
I yielded a pleasant odor like the best myrrh,
Like galbanum and onyx, and fragrant storax,
And like the fume of frankincense in the tabernacle.
As the fir-tree I stretched out my branches,
And my branches are the branches of honor and grace.

Thus happily rendered by the author of the Danish Epi-
metrum :

Som balsom og kanel jeg vellugh spredte
Rundt om mig ud, lig ædle myrrha-dust;
Som galban, stakte og onych jeg qvæged',
Lig templets viraklugt jeg frydede.
Lig terebinthen grene jeg udbredte,
Af pragt og skjonhed fulde, &c.

(¹²) *The scented aloes*, ————] The dried wood of the aloes-tree has a very fragrant smell, and, in conjunction with many other odoriferous plants here referred to, was in high approbation among the Hebrews for its exquisite exhalation.—See note (7) of the present idyl.

(¹³) ———— *and each shrub that showers*] Not widely different from Shakspeare in the following amatory sonnet:

The forward violet thus did I chide :

“ Sweet thief! whence didst thou steal thy sweet, that smells,
If not from my love’s breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells
In my love’s veins thou hast too grossly dyed.”
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marjoram had stolen thy hair;
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair;
A third, nor red nor white, had stolen of both,
And to his robbery had annexed thy breath;
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth,
A vengeful canker ate him up to death :
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see
But scent or colour it had stolen from thee.

(¹⁴) *O pride of gardens! fount of endless sweets !*] I have adopted the very spirited amendment of Dr. Percy, which, if I mistake not, I have seen introduced into one or two French translations. In the common version it occurs ‘*a fountain of gardens,*’ &c.—a phraseology extremely insipid in comparison with the present, and not more true to the original.

In Mr. Maundrell’s Travels we meet with the following description, which has seldom been omitted by the commentators in their illustrations of this beautiful passage. “There is a very deep rupture in the side of Libanus, running at least seven hours’ travel directly up into the mountain. It is on both sides exceedingly steep and high, clothed with fragrant greens from top to bottom, and every-where refreshed with fountains falling down from the rocks in pleasant cascades—the ingenious work of nature. The streams all uniting at the

bottom, make a full and rapid torrent, whose agreeable murmuring is heard all over the place, and adds no small pleasure to it." *Travels*, p. 118.

(15) *Awake, O North-wind! come, thou Southern breeze.*] This bold and animated apostrophe, by which the royal bride continues the beautiful metaphor of a garden and its various delights, is peculiarly in the style of sacred poesy. Thus in the triumphal Song of Deborah, *Judg.* v. 12.

Awake, Deborah, awake;
Awake, awake—rehearse the Song.
Arise, Barak, arise!
Lead captive thy captivity, Son of Abinoam!

Or, as the last line might be rendered,

Re-echo thy responses, Son of Abinoam!

So again *Psalms* lvii. 8.

Awake, O my glory! awake, lute and harp!
I, too, will awake right early.

Whence Mr. Gray, confessedly:

Awake, Æolian lyre! awake,
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings.

The royal bride is not to be supposed to call for these opposite currents of air at the same time: but she implores their luxurious assistance at distinct and alternate periods. She addresses the South-wind, that under his genial and maturating influence the fruits of her garden may ripen, and its gums and spices flow forth; and the North-wind, that he may breathe a re-

animating coolness, during the languid heat of the noon, and fan her beloved with odoriferous gales. The beautiful Rádhá, in the Songs of Jayadéva, bursts into a similar apostrophe: "O gale scented with sandal, who breathest love from the regions of the South, be propitious but for a moment."

(¹⁶) *That my beloved through its bowers may roam,*] In the *Gitágovindá* the lovely Rádhá is in like manner invited to enter into the garden or the embraces of her beloved:

"Enter, sweet Rádhá, the bower of Heri! seek delight, O thou whose bosom laughs with the foretaste of happiness! Enter, sweet Rádhá, the bower graced with a bed of *asóca*-leaves! seek delight, O thou whose garland leaps with joy on thy breast! Enter, sweet Rádhá, the bower illumined with gay blossoms! seek delight, O thou whose limbs far exceed them in softness! Enter, O Rádhá, the bower made cool and fragrant by gales from the woods of Malaya! seek delight, O thou whose amorous lays are softer than the breezes! Enter, O Rádhá, the bower which resounds with the murmur of honey-making bees! seek delight, O thou whose embrace yields more exquisite sweetness! Enter, O Rádhá, the bower attuned by the melodious band of *Cócilas*! seek delight, O thou whose lips, which outshine the grains of the pomegranate, are embellished, when thou speakest, by the brightness of thy teeth! Long has he borne thee in his mind; and now, in an agony of desire, he pants to taste nectar from thy lip."

Not widely different the German Theocritus, though in language somewhat less animated:

"O wenn ich einst als braut in eure schatten führe, dann sollen eure farben höher glühen, ihr blumen; dann düftet ihr

jeden wolgeruch zu! dann bieget, ihr bäume bieget, die schattigten aeste zu ihr herunter, mit süssen fruchten behangen!"—Cloe rief ihm: "Alexis sie liebt dich! Hier steht sie unter dem hollunderbaum; komm, küsse die thränen von ihren wangen, die sie vor liebe weint."—"O should I once enter your shades as her bridegroom! then glow, ye flowers, with a livelier tincture; then wave, ye fragrances, all your wings around her; then bend, ye forests, bend over her your darkest branches loaded with most delicious fruits!"—Chloe beheld and called him: "Alexis, she loves thee—lo! where she lies beneath yonder chesnut-shades: go, kiss off the tears of love which glisten on her cheeks!"

(17) *On milk I banquet, on the honied comb,*] Milk and honey form still a luscious repast in the opinion of many African and Asiatic nations, and are in common use among them. Of the latter this is more especially true; for it is often recurred to as food in situations where the former cannot be procured. Such, ever strict to nature, the Homer of Portugal states to have been the sustenance of the savage seized by the soldiers of De Gama in their voyage to the East-Indies: Lus. v. 27.

Que tomarão per força, em quanto apanha
De mel os doces favos na montanha.

Whom on the forest height by force they caught,
As, distant wandered from the call of home,
He sucked the honey from the porous comb.

MICKLE.

The honey thus spontaneously distilling (in the language of Homer, *μελι καταλειβομενον*) was supposed by the ancients

to have been peculiarly sweet and luscious; and we find a distinction made in all sacred poetry, therefore, between the דבש or common honey, and צופים נפת, the wild dropping honey-comb.

(¹⁸) *Eat, O my friend! O drink with ample draught!*] This address in the Bible version, and in all the readings I have yet met with, is applied to the friends or companions either of the bride or the bridegroom. To Dr. Geddes I am solely indebted for what appears to me a very elegant variation. The words are certainly a reply of the royal bride to the declaration of king Solomon, by which she excites him to a continuation of the banquet. My learned friend has left a manuscript observation upon this passage to this very effect. Melesigenio continues the common interpretation, which he amplifies perhaps unnecessarily:

Compagni, su, cibatevi,
Bevete, e ne' bicchieri
Tuffate, o diletissimi,
Scordatevi i pensieri.

NOTES ON IDYL VII.

(¹) *Asleep I lay, but fancy was awake.*] There can be no doubt that the beginning of this idyl is the rehearsal of a dream by the fair bride to her companions; and it bears so strong a resemblance to the following well-known Ode of Anacreon, that Dr. Hodgson cannot avoid conceiving the bard of Teos to have been acquainted with it, and to have drawn from it some of the outlines of his expressions.

Without entering into so questionable a speculation, I will transcribe the ode referred to, upon which the learned reader may form his own judgment. Ode Γ.

Μεσονυκτιοις ποθ' ὤραις,
 Στρεφεται ὅτ' Ἀρκτος ἤδη
 Κατα χεира τὲ Βωωτῆ,
 Μερῶπων δὲ φυλα πάντα
 Κεαται κοπῇ δαμνεντα,
 Τοτ' Ἐρως ἐπισταθεῖς μεν
 Θυρεῶν ἐκοπτ' ὀρχηας.
 Τίς, εφην, θυρας αρασσει,
 Κατα μεν σχισας ονειρες;
 Ὅ δ' Ἐρως, Ἀνοιγε, φησι,
 Βρεφος εἰμι, μὴ φοβῆσαι·
 Βρεχομαι δὲ, κασεληνον
 Κατα νυκτα πεπλανημαι.
 Ἐλεησα ταυτ' ἀκυσας·

Ἀνα δ' εὐθυ λυχνον αἶψας
 Ἀνεῶξα, καὶ βρεφός μεν
 Ἐσορῶ φερόντα τόξον,
 Πτερυγας τε καὶ φαρετρήν·
 Παρα δ' ἴστιν καθίσσας
 Παλαμαῖσι χεῖρας αὐτῶ
 Ἀνεθαλπόν, ἐκ δὲ χαιτῆς
 Ἀπεθλίβον ὕγρον ὕδωρ.

Ὅ δ', ἐπεὶ κρυὸς μεθήκε,
 Φερε, φησί, πειρασώμεν.
 Τοδὲ τόξον, ἐστὶ μοι νυν,
 Βλαβεται βραχέισα νευρῇ;
 Τανυεὶ δὲ, καὶ με τυπτει
 Μεσον ἥπαρ, ὥσπερ οἰστρος,
 Ἀνα δ' ἄλλεται καχαῶν,
 Ξενο, δ' εἶπε, συγχαραρήϊ·
 Κερας ἀβλαβες μεν ἐστὶ,
 Σὺ δὲ καρδίην πονήσεις.

'Twas midnight deep—the glimmering bear
 Showed near the pole his shaggy hair,
 And every heart, by toil opprest,
 Enjoyed the genial balm of rest;
 Secure from harm, my door was locked,
 When Love approached, and loudly knocked.
 'Who's there?' I cried—'What vagrant foe
 'Thus wakes me with repeated blow?'—
 'Fear not,' said he with piteous din;
 'Pray ope the door, and let me in;

'A poor unsheltered boy am I,
 'For help who know not where to fly;
 'Lost in the dark, and with the dews
 'All cold and wet that midnight brews.'—
 Wretch that I was! as thus he said,
 I trimmed my light, and left my bed,
 And oped the door; and there, 'tis true,
 A friendless boy assailed my view,
 But graced with wings, with bow in hand
 And quiver, as for combat, manned.
 I roused the fire, with soul benign,
 His little fingers warmed in mine,
 Cheered him with kindness, and with care
 Wrung the cold dew-drops from his hair.
 And, as his limbs began to glow,
 'Now, sir,' said he, 'I'll try my bow,
 'Whether the vapors or the shower
 'Have yet relaxed its springy power.'—
 He said—and instant twanged a dart,
 Up to its feathers, through my heart;
 And, laughing, fled; and, flying, cried,
 'Give, give me joy—my bow I've tried,
 'And through the world thy heart shall tell
 'How firm its cord.—so fare thee well!'

Much of the beauty of this ode consists in the ignorance of the poet concerning the benighted little boy whom he generously succoured in his distresses. Had he known him, he would either have refused admission to him, or been guarded against his attacks. In several of our best versions of this ad-

mirable production, this circumstance is however either totally forgotten, or the epigrammatic point completely ruined by a different turn to the passage, in consequence of which the poet is stated to have been intimately acquainted with his guest from the first. Thus in the elegant but too diffuse version of Mr. Moore :

I heard the baby's tale of woe;
I heard the bitter night-winds blow;
And sighing for his piteous fate
I trimmed my lamp and oped the gate.
'Twas Love! the little wandering sprite,
His pinions sparkled through the night—
I knew him by his bow and dart;
I knew him by my fluttering heart.

Of these lines not a syllable of the last occurs in Anacreon, nor the first member of the preceding.

The reader may compare the opening of the present idyl with one of Gesner, entitled Daphnis—"In stiller nacht hatte Daphnis sich zu seines mädgens hütte geschlichen; den die liebe macht schlaflos," &c.

(²) ——— *my undefiled!* ———] I have anxiously preserved the common version, for the original will admit of it, and it is not deficient in beauty. The Hebrew term תַּמָּה might however, with more propriety, perhaps, be rendered my 'accomplished one' than my 'undefiled:' and it is so rendered by Mr. Green, while Dr. Hodgson has exchanged the common term for 'my perfect one.' My friend Dr.

Geddes, in a manuscript notice on this verse, co-incides with the former of these critics.

(3) *I saw his fingers thrust within the door,*] That is 'through the latch- or key-hole.'—"It was the ancient custom to secure the door of a house by a cross-bar, or bolt; which, at night, was fastened with a little button or pin. In the upper part of the door was left a round hole, through which any person from without might thrust his arm, and remove the bar, unless this additional security were superadded. Clerc's Comment. and Claud. Salmas. in Solinum, p. 649." Dr. Percy's Translation.

(4) *Swift, and the vase of fragrant myrrh o'erthrew;*] 'Pure or perhaps 'liquid myrrh,' מֵוֶר עֶבֶר; that which weeps or drops from the tree, the most esteemed, but most expensive of this class of perfumes. That it was no uncommon practice for eastern ladies to prepare vases of fragrance, as well as other presents, with which to welcome the visits of their lovers, we may learn from the following beït in the eleventh gazel of Hafiz, letter *و*.

شاهد دل ربایم می کند از برای
من
نقشن و نکار و رنگ و بو تازه بتازه نو
بنو

For me the angel of my heart prepares
Chaplets, and unguents, breathing fragrant airs.

(5) *Th' ethereal odor from my hands distilled,* } Mrs. Francis
Dropped o'er the bolt, ————— } has noticed,
 upon this passage, a couplet in the Seven Fountains of sir
 William Jones, so completely similar in idea, that it is not im-
 probable this admirable scholar had his eye directed to it at
 the time it was composed :

She turns the key—her cheeks like roses bloom ;
And on the lock her fingers drop perfume.

It is thus elegantly rendered by Duport :

Dumque seram tetigi, super ipsa manubria myrrha
 Manare fragranti statim
 Cœperunt digiti, stacten et suaveolentem
 Stillare rorantes manus.

(6) ————— *and stripped me of its veil.*] To tear
 away the veil from an eastern lady is one of the greatest indig-
 nities that can be offered to her; and is metaphorically used in
 many instances to express violation of her person. Thus Ca-
 bihah, the mother of the caliph Motaz, complained of Saleh
 the Turkish chief, 'He has torn my veil:' meaning hereby
 that he had dishonoured her.—Herbelot Bibl. Orient. art.
 Motaz.

So Hafiz in the following beit, in which, consistently with
 the tradition of the East, he speaks of the wife of Potiphar
 under the denomination of Zuleikha :

من از ان حسن روز آفزون که یوسف
 داشت دانستم
 که عشت از پرده عصمت برون! ارد
 زلیخارا

Led captive by the victor charms
 O'er Joseph's face that play,
 Her *veil of chastity* at length
 Zuleikha flings away.

(7) *Daughters of Salem!* —————] The fair narrator here obviously closes the history of her dream, and addresses herself immediately to her auditors with a message to the beloved of her heart.

(8) *What can ye say, but that I faint with love?*] The common reading is given without this interrogation, which adds a high degree of animation to the passage, and is strictly consistent with the original. Houbigant proposes it in this way.—*Attendant*. “What should we tell him?”—*Bride*. “That I am sick of love.”—But to obtain this he introduces the unnecessary alteration of תגידו for הנגידו, and renders the text, at the same time, far less spirited and forcible.

The passage may remind many of my readers of the following of Ariosto: Orland. Fur. xix.

Se di disio non vuol morir, bisegna
 Che senza indugio ella se stessa aiti.

Sick with desire, from him she would receive
 What only can her soul's dear health retrieve.

HOÖLE.

(9) *Chief of ten thousand,* —————] I have purposely followed the common version, which is equally beautiful and explicit. Mr. Parkhurst, however, translates the passage דבול מדבבה, ‘lighted with ten thousand lamps; or

dazzling as a gaudy bridegroom, surrounded with ten thousand lamps.' I see no necessity for this variation. There can be no doubt, however, of the existence of such splendid banquets, as the ingenious lexicographer here adverts to, among oriental nations: to which we find a full reference in the following verses of Lucretius: *Rer. Nat.* ii. 24.

Si non aurea sunt juvenum simulacra per ædeis,
Lampadas igniferas manibus retinentia dextris,
Lumina nocturnis epulis ut subpeditentur:
Nec domus argento fulget, auroque renidet,
Nec citharæ rebeant laqueata aurataque templa.

What though the dome be wanting whose proud wall's
A thousand lamps irradiate, propt sublime
By frolic forms of youths in massy gold,
Flinging their splendors o'er the midnight feast?
Though gold and silver blaze not o'er the board,
Nor musc echo round the gaudy roof?

(¹⁰) *Of noblest mold his head;—*] 'His head is as the most fine gold.' The term 'golden' was equally used by Asiatics and Greeks, to denote consummate excellence and beauty. Thus Theocritus, idyl III. 28.

Ὡδὲ καὶ ἡ χρυσεὰ Ἑλένα διεφαινετ'—.

So shone the *golden* Helen—.

The fiction of the first and happiest age of the world is uniformly, for the same reason, denominated the age of *gold*. From the unclouded splendor with which the sun fertilises and

matures the luxurious plains of Delos, Apollo himself was feigned to have been born in this island; and all its productions are said to be of gold. Thus Callimachus, *Od. ad Del.*

Χρυσέα τοι τὸτ' πάντα θεμειλία γεινατο, Δηλε, &c.

In reality, the Greek term for gold (χρυσός), *chrusos*, appears to be nothing more than a compound of two Ammonian radicles, if we may pay any credit to Mr. Bryant's etymology, with a Doric termination; and implies the 'radiance' or 'splendor of the sun.' *Cur-Eus* contracted into *C'reus*; and, with the addition of the termination above, *Creusos*—an appellation bestowed upon this metal either literally, from its yellow glitter when polished, or metaphorically, from its superior value; and hence the term *golden* may constitute an easy figure for whatever is *splendid*, *illustrious*, or *excellent*. It is so explained in the present instance by Melesigenio:

N'é il bel capo un gioiel d'oro,

Un tesoro ———

Dr. Hodgson, however, understands the phrase in the text in its literal sense. "In the hair described by Anacreon," says he, "there is also a mixture of golden and black." *Od. xxix*,

Λιπαρας κομας ποιησον,

Τα μεν ενδοθεν μελαινας,

Τα δ' ες ακρον ηλιωσας.

Let his hair, Love's favourite net,

Soft descend in waves of jet;

But the golden-curled extremes

Brighten into sunny beams.

ADDISON.

“Ovid,” continues he, “unites the same colours in his description of hair.” Am. El. xiv. 9.

Nec tamen ater erat, nec erat color aureus illis,
Sed quamvis neuter mixtus uterque color.

Though neither black nor golden was her hair,
Yet black and golden both united were.

Dr. HODGSON:

But such an interpretation can scarcely, I think, apply to the passage before us, in which we are expressly told, not only that the hair of the Hebrew monarch was black, but of the purest and jettiest black—black as a raven.

(11) *Black as a raven* —————] So Ossian, Fingal II. “Her hair was the wing of the raven.”—This among orientals is the favourite hue even to the present day. Thus Hafiz:

بیاض روی تو روشنتر از رخ روز
سواد زلف تو تار یکتر از ظلمت
داج

Thy face is brighter than the cheek of day,
Blacker thy locks than midnight's deepest sway.

So also Ferdusi in his *شاه نامه* (*Shah námeh*), when describing the daughter of Afrasiab:

همه دخت تر کان پو شیده روی
 همه سرو قد و همه شهوی
 همه رخ پر از گل چشم پر زخوان
 همه لب پر از می بیوی کلان

Her—trains of deep-veiled, Turkish maids entwine,
 Of cypress-mold, and cheeks that shame the rose,
Locks black as musk, with lips surpassing wine,
 And amorous eyes in wanton sleep that dose.

So the Turkish poet Mohammed Ben Abdalla el Catib:

و فرع یزین المتن اسود فاحم

Of black, *c'en blackest* hue, and unconfined,
 Her shadowy tresses wantoned in the wind.

(¹²) *His eyes the milk-white dove's, that gaily beam* } Nothing
Near the full fountain, ————— } can pos-
 sibly surpass the exquisite beauty of the entire portraiture: but
 this inimitable delineation of the eyes is entitled to peculiar no-
 tice, and gives us the idea of an equal intermixture of gaiety
 and tenderness.

We have a similar picture, and of nearly equal beauty, in the Gitâgovindâ. "His passion was inflamed by the glances of her eyes, which played like a pair of *water-birds* with azure plumage, that sport near a full-blown lotos on a pool in the season of dew." And again, "She whose wanton eye resembles blue water-lilies agitated by the breeze."

The reading proposed by Dr. Hodgson, who renders the expression here translated, 'sitting cheerfully by the rivers of water'—which '*dwell amongst the ripe corn*,' is, in my estimation, very deficient in beauty, when compared with the common version. The whole sentence, according to the doctor, should run thus:

His eyes are like pigeons over torrents of water,
That bathe themselves in milk
And dwell amongst the ripe corn.

The version of Melesigenio is different from either; yet I think by no means equal to that offered in the text:

Di colombe in riva a' fiumi
Son suoi lumi,
Che nel latte stan nuotando,
Riposando
Come gemma nel caston.

His eyes are like the dove's that look
Gaily o'er the bank and brook;
Swimming with milk, and set with grace,
Like a jewel in its case.

The rendering of Duport is, I find, entirely consentaneous with that I have preferred:

Sunt oculi, quales, en, cernimus esse columbis
Puros aquarum ad rivulos:
Pulchelli, nitidi, *loti quasi lacte fuissent*,
Ita albicant bellè siti.

(13) *Rich beds of sprouting spices are his cheeks;*] This description of the pullulating beard upon the cheeks of the accomplished bridegroom can only be rivalled by the admirable delineation of his eyes. In the Bible version, which is correctly rendered from the Hebrew, we read it 'His cheeks are as a bed:' but the Septuagint, with greater accuracy, gives us the plural number.

The idea is so perfectly consentaneous with the following exquisite verses of Lucretius, in which he describes the first sprouting forth of herbs and shrubs from the face of maternal earth, in the commencement of the world, that I cannot avoid transcribing them : Rer. Nat. v. 781.

Principio, genus herbarum, viridemque nitorem,
 Terra dedit circum colleis ; camposque per omneis
 Florida fulserunt viridanti prata colore :
 Arboribusque datus est variis exinde per auras
 Crescundi magnum inmissis certamen habenis.
 Ut pluma, atque pilei primum, setæque, creantur
 Quadrupedum membris, et corpore pennipotentum ;
 Sic nova tum tellus herbas, virgultaque, primum
 Substulit.

And, first, the race she reared of verdant herbs,
 Glistening o'er every hill ; the fields at large
 Shone with the verdant tincture ; and the trees
 Felt the deep impulse, and, with outstretched arms,
 Broke from their bonds, rejoicing. As the down
 Shoots from the winged nations, or from beasts
 Bristles or hair, so poured the new-born earth
 Plants, fruits, and herbage.

(¹⁴) *His lips of ruby-lily; —————*] Such is the ingenious interpretation of bishop Patrick, who supposes the lily here instanced to be the same which, on account of its deep-red color, is particularly called by Pliny *rubens lilium*, and which he tells us was much esteemed in Syria. With equal elegance Bion, describing the death of Adonis, says, idyl A. 11.

Και το ῥόδον φευγει τω χειλεος.——

And from *his lips the roses* fled.——

Melesigenio supports the same idea:

Soni i labbri *porporini*

Rugiadosi gigli.

(¹⁵) *Fragrant as myrrh, —————*] ‘Lilies dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.’ An expression obviously denoting the sweetness of his conversation. The original עֵבֶר is more correctly rendered by Dr. Hodgson ‘liquid myrrh;’ and is elegantly supposed by sir Thomas Brown to refer to “the roscid and honey drops observable in the flowers of martagons and inverted flowered lilies; and is probably the standing sweet dew on the white eyes of the crown-imperial, now common among us.” Thus the disconsolate Madháva, in the songs of Jayadéva: “I meditate on the fragrant lotos of her mouth, on her nectar-dropping speech, on her lips ruddy as the berries of the bimba.”

(¹⁶) *While, through the polished ivory of his skin,*] I have followed the version of the Septuagint, the interpretation of which is, ‘His body is an ivory casket over a sapphire stone’——

“meaning,” says the bishop of Dromore, “that the blue veins were seen through his clear snowy skin, like a sapphire stone through a thin transparent plate of ivory.” A fine and elegant comparison!—So Ariosto, in his delineation of Angelica, Orland. Furios. cant. x. though with less felicity of image:

————— a quel parlare ella divegna
Quale è di grana un bianco avorio asperso.

While yet she spoke her rising blushes spread;
So polished ivory shows when stained with red.

HOOLE.

(¹⁷) *As marble pillars* —————] Perfectly polished and white. Thus Hafiz, indulging a similar idea, in a gazel already quoted:

ساقی سیم ساق من مست میم پیار
صبی

O thou whose polished legs like silver shine!
My heart is ravished as thou bring'st me wine.

The phrase سیمین ساق (*simyn saq*) ‘silver-legged,’ is common in Persia to denote an elegance of this limb.

(¹⁸) ————— on a golden base:] ‘On pedestals of fine gold.’ These doubtless refer to the magnificence of his

sandals, bound probably with golden ribbands or laces. See note on idyl IX. (1). Thus Virgil, *Æn.* xi. 488.

———— surasque incluserat auro.

———— with gold his legs he laced.

Thus also Callimachus, more at large, in his Hymn to Apollo, 32.

Χρυσέα τῷ πολλῶνι, το τ' ἐνδυτον, ἡτ' ἐπιπορπισ,
Ἡ τελευρη, το τ' αἰμμα το Λυκτιον, ἡ τε φαρετρη
Χρυσέα καὶ τὰ πεδίλα· πολυχρυσος γὰρ Ἀπολλων.

A golden robe invests the glorious god;
His shining feet with *golden sandals* shod;
Gold are his harp, his quiver, and his bow. DODD.

(19) *To feed on fragrance, and with lavish hand* } Thus Mos-
Pluck the young lilies, ————— } chus, descri-
bing the beautiful Europa, idyl B. 28.

ὦς εἰπουσ', ἀνορουσε· φίλας δ' ἐπεδιζέθ' ἑταίρας
Ἡλικας, οἰεταί, θυμηρεας, εὐπατρειας·
Τῇσιν αἰε συναθρεν, ὅτ' ἐς χορον ἐντυναιτο,
Ἡ ὅτε φαιδρυνοίτο χοοῖα προχοῇσιν Ἀναυρου,
Ἡ ὅποτ' ἐκ λειμῶνος εὐπνοῖα λειρία κερσοί.

This said, she rose, and joined her loved compeers,
Friends of her heart, of equal rank and years;
With whom the mazy dance she wove, or gave
Her limbs, Anaurus! to thy lucid wave,

Or, from the meads thy fragrant banks that bound,
Plucked the sweet lilies gaily blooming round.'

Not widely different Virgil, Ecl. ii. 45.

Huc ade, O formose puer! tibi lilia plenis
 Ecce ferunt nymphæ calathis.————

Come, beauteous boy! the nymphs in baskets bring
 For thee the loveliest *lilies* of the spring.

WARTON.

(²⁰) *Beauteous as Salem art thou*, —————] Jerusalem was esteemed the most charming place in all Palestine; and is called by Jeremiah, Lament. ii. 15.

———— the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth.

(²¹) *Graceful as Tirza's undulating grove*;] The very name of the place bespeaks its felicity of scenery—תִּרְצָה, from רִצָּה, 'delectable.'—After the revolt of Rehoboam the kings of Israel made choice of this fascinating spot on which to erect the royal city: and it preserved its pre-eminence till the reign of Omri, who founded Samaria.

(²²) *Dazzling as armies, that, in bright array*,] The original term here translated 'dazzling' certainly implies in one of its senses 'terrible,' אִימָה, and is so rendered in the Bible version; but such a meaning is obviously inappropriate, and requires correction. Dr. Hodgson interprets it with more propriety 'awe-striking.' In Persia, one of the most common

epithets applied by a lover to his mistress is دهشت نداز (*deheshet andaz*), which is perfectly synonymous, 'awe-striking,' or 'striking with fear.'—The comparison is well illustrated by Tasso in his description of Clorinda, iii. 22.

Lampeggiar gli occhi, e folgorar gli sguardi
Dolce ne l'ira, or che farian nel riso?

Keen flash her eyes, her look with fury glows,
Yet e'en in rage each feature lovely shows:
What charms must then her winning smile disclose?

And perhaps more fully by Anacreon, in his description of the various gifts bestowed by nature upon different animals, ode ii.

Τοις ἀνδρασι φρονημα.—
Γυναιξιν οὐκ ἐτ' εἶχεν;
Τι οὖν διδωσι; καλλος,
Ἀντ' ἀσπιδων ἅπασων
Ἀντ' ἐγχέων ἅπαντων.
Νικα δὲ καὶ σιδηρον,
Καὶ πυρ, καλὴ τις οὐσα.

To man she gave a vigorous mind,
But barred the gift from womankind.—
Has woman then no rival grace?
Yes—all the conquering charms of face:
Charms no shield can turn askance,
Keener than the keenest lance;
For be beauty once beheld
Fires and swords are instant quelled.

The same idea is more fully, however, and magnificently explained by the following passage in Job xxxvii. 21, 22.

And now see we not the bright radiance behind the clouds
Till the wind passeth along, and disperseth them:
'Then' cometh the clear lustre from the north,—
The *terribly-dazzling* majesty of God.

(²³) *Gleam o'er the mountains and reflect the day.*] The phenomenon is thus admirably delineated by Lucretius, *Rer. Nat.* ii. 323.

Præterea, magnæ legiones quom loca cursu
Camporum complent, belli simulacra cientes;
Fulgur ubi ad cælum se tollit, totaque circum
Ære renidescit tellus; subterque, virûm vi,
Excitur pedibus sonitus, clamoreque montes
Ictei rejectant voces ad sidera mundi;
Et circum volitant equites, mediosque repente
Transmittunt, valido quatientes inpete, campos:
Et tamen est quidam locus altis montibus, unde
Stare videntur; et in campis consistere fulgur.

Thus, too, when warlike squadrons crowd the field,
Horrent in arms, with horses scarce restrained,
Shaking the solid glebe; while the bright pomp
Flames through the skies, and gilds the glowing earth;
While groans the ground beneath their mighty tread,
And hills and heavens re-echo to their shouts;
Viewed from afar, the splendid scene that spreads
Seems void of motion, to the fields affixt.

(²⁴) *Turn, turn thee from me, turn those radiant eyes]* “Turn thine eyes away from me—for they have overcome me.” The artillery of the eyes is an idea common to poets of every nation. Thus Anacreon:

Συ μὲν λεγεις τα Θηβης,
 ‘Ο δ’ αυ Φρυγων αὔτας,
 Εγω δ’ εμας ἀλωσεις·
 Ουχ’ ἵππος ωλεσεν με,
 Ου πεζος, ουχι νηες·
 Στρατος δε καινος αλλος
 Απ’ ομματων βαλων με.

Sing thou of Thebes—let others tell
 How Troy’s foundations rose and fell,
 My numbers shall alone repeat
 My own rencounters, and defeat.
 Me fleets and armies ne’er appall—
 ’Tis to a different host I fall:
 A host *within thine eyes, my fair,*
That lurk and ply their arrows there.

So Musæus, Her. et Leandr.:

Καλλος γαρ περιπυστον αμωμητοιο γυναικος
 Οξυτερον μεροπεσσι πελει πτεροεντος οϊστου.
 Οφθαλμος δ’ οδος εστιν· απ’ οφθαλμοιο βολων
 Ελκος ολισθαινει, και επι φρενας ανδρος οδευει.

The fair, renowned for beauty, with her charms
 Wounds us more keenly than the keenest arms.

But chief her eyes assault us :—from her eyes,
Straight to the heart, her fiercest lightning flies.

Thus Racine, in a play I do not immediately recall to memory,

De l'éclair de ses yeux son ame est ébloui.

The lightning of her eyes his soul o'erwhelms.

So, also, the following conceit in one of the madrigals of Guarini :

Occhi, stelle mortali
Ministri de' miei mali,
Che 'n sogno anco mostrate
Che 'l mio morir bramate ;
Se chiusi m'uccidete,
Aperti che farete ?

Dread eyes ! malignant stars ! that dart
Such mischiefs through my throbbing heart !
And, e'en while closed, so fell your ire,
That show my death you still desire ;
If, while asleep, my life ye take,
What will ye do when broad awake ?

(²⁵) *Fine as the goats of Gilead are thy locks.*] This and several of the ensuing lines are iterated from idyl V. p. 23. with the omission of a single image alone ; concerning which figure and our poet's attachment to it, the reader may consult the notes on Idyl IV. (²) and (³).

(²⁶) *Beneath thy shadowy tresses, as they flow,* } The si-
O'er thy fair cheeks pomegranate blossoms blow. } mile is
 still common in the East. Thus, in an anonymous Persian
 ode cited by sir William Jones, vol. ii. p. 310, as the production
 of a native of Damascus, “The *pomegranate* brings to my mind
 the blushes of my beloved, when her cheeks are colored with
 a modest resentment.”

(²⁷) *Let queens and concubines surround the throne.*] “In
 my palace are three-score queens and four-score concubines,
 and virgins without number.” The Hebrew monarchs too
 generally indulged themselves in the cupidinous enjoyments
 of the Asiatic world;—and the ladies of whom their haram
 consisted, were as here stated of three classes, viz. *queens*, or
 those of noble parentage, who at the celebration of their nup-
 tials brought ample dowries with them: *concubines*, who were
 selected on account of their personal charms, and were mar-
 ried without dowries: and *virgins*, who were also procured by
 the purveyors royal in consequence of their beauty, and were
 in waiting to be introduced to the royal embraces. With the
 number of these last the Hebrew monarch does not appear
 to have been acquainted; but the whole establishment is ex-
 tremely diminutive, compared with the magnitude it acquired
 a few years afterwards; for we are told 1 Kings xi. 3. that he
 possessed at one time not less than seven hundred queens, and
 three hundred concubines: and, as Solomon could not exceed
 fifty-eight years of age at the time of his demise, and conse-
 quently could not fill the throne for more than thirty-eight
 years, I have endeavoured in the Preface, from this variation
 in the extent of his seraglio, to calculate that he must neces-
 sarily have been a young man at the period alluded to in the

text, and that his age did not probably exceed twenty-five or twenty-six.

A retinue of seven hundred queens and three hundred concubines, and perhaps double the number of virgins in waiting for the honor of a matrimonial establishment, may appear enormous to an European courtier: but it bears no proportion to the extent and magnificence of the seraglios of many other oriental princes, concerning which we have received indubitable evidence from the writings of Mr. Hanway and sir William Jones.

Duport gives a different interpretation to the passage before us than is generally admitted by the commentators, and supposes that the enraptured monarch is here only enumerating the princely retinue, or train of ladies of honor, which he had prepared for his beloved to be in daily attendance upon her:

Suntque *reginæ comites amicæ*
Sexies denæ tibi, pulchra virgo,
Octies denæ quoque concubinæ et,
Mille puellæ.

This rendering, however, is not justified either by the text or context.

(²⁸) *My dove, my undefiled is mine alone.*] The Bible rendering does not give the true sense of the passage—"My dove, my undefiled is *but* one." The meaning of Solomon's address is obvious. "Notwithstanding the number and personal attractions of the princesses by whom I am surrounded, my dove, my undefiled, is the *only one* to me—the *sole* possessor of my heart."

(29) ——— *her mother's sole delight on earth,* } Dr. Percy
The darling joy of her who gave her birth. } has here, I
 think, deviated unnecessarily from the common version, by
 rendering the passage 'She is "dear to me, as" an only
 "child" to her mother: as her darling to her that bare her.'
 He is countenanced, however, by Melesigenio:

Una, ch' è il giubilo
 Materno, e fia;
 Una e soletta
 Che la felice
 Sua genitrice
 Può d'ogni macola
 Scevra vantar.

In the version given in the text I am supported by Dr. Hodgson; who justly observes that the term *אחת*, although it generally bear the interpretation of "one," signifies rather the "favorite one" or "delight" of her mother in the present instance. It cannot imply that she was the *only* daughter of her mother, for the royal bride herself tells us, *Idyl XII.* p. 59. that she had a sister much younger than herself. The phraseology is common to the writings of the royal poet, and identifies, in some degree, his different compositions. Thus, speaking of himself, *Prov. iv. 3.* in which the epithet 'beloved' is happily supplied in the Bible version:

I was my father's darling son;
 The *only* 'beloved' in the sight of my mother.

So, in the same book *viii. 30.* in which Wisdom apostrophises mankind:

'Then was I the 'favourite' *one* brought up by him,
Daily was I 'his' delight, rejoicing ever in his presence.

(30) *Say, who is she, o'er every beauty born*] I think it almost impossible to doubt that the question here proposed is a continuation of the royal eulogy, and as such it is regarded by almost all our best commentators. In the Bible translation, however, as well as in that of Dr. Hodgson, and Melesigenio, it is separated both from the prior and posterior contexts; and appears as an interpolation without any definite reference. The same injudicious separation, in the common version, occurs in Prov. xxxi. 28 and 29. which should thus be connected:

Her children rise up and call her blessed;
Her husband, and 'thus' he extolleth her:
'Many daughters have done well, but thou excellest them all;
'Favor 'is' deceitful, beauty vain,
"But" the woman 'who' feareth the LORD shall be praised.'

The judicious author of the Danish epimetrum has indeed thus rendered it:

Lovprisende fremtræde sønnerne,
Af hendes ross fuld strømmer mandens mund,
'Man ædel daad hos mangel qvinde fandt,
'Dog overtraf dem alle—alle du!
— 'Kun dunst er ynde, skjönhed tidens rov,
'Jehovas frygt er qvindens sande pris;
'Saa priser denne da for virksom flid,
'Ög offentlig lovsynger hendes dyd !'

(י') *Who thus advances lovely as the morn*] The couplet in the original, that answers to this and the ensuing verse (for the third is of doubtful interpretation), may vie with the boldest and most beautiful imagery of the most successful poets of every nation.

מי זאת הנשקפה כמו שחר
יפה כל בנה ברה כחמה

The bards of the East throng indeed with similes drawn from the same magnificent sources. Thus, in correspondence with that immediately before us, 2 Sam. xxiii. 4.

As the *light of the morning* a sun shall arise,
A *morning bright without clouds*,
When the tender grass, after rain, springeth out of the earth.

In a Bodleian manuscript of some authority, the first line of this latter passage occurs thus:

As the light of the morning JEHOVAH, the sun, shall arise.

So Isaiah, prophesying of Belshazar, exclaims, ch. xiv. 12. :

O Lucifer! *son of the morning!* how art thou fallen from heav'n!

It is by a similar image that Theocritus delineates the beautiful Helen: idyl IH.

Αως αντελλοισα καλον διεφαινε προσωπον,
Ωδε και αχρυσσα Ελενα διεφαινεται εν ἡμιν.

As beams the *rising morn* in vernal pride,
The golden-tressed Hellen all out-vied.

(³²) *Fair as the morn*—] יפה “Lovely” or “beautiful” with respect to complexion; as the term ברה “brilliant” or “refulgent” is applied to the sun in consequence of his splendid lustre. On the former account the moon was supposed by all oriental nations to be the most exquisite type of perfection. Thus the son of Sirach, who was a close copyist of Solomon, (Ecclesiasticus xliii. 9.), declares her to be

The beauty of heaven, the glory of the stars,
An ornamental lustre in the sublimest regions of the LORD.

. Among the Persians, the most beautiful of mankind whom the hand of the Creator ever fashioned, was supposed to be the patriarch Joseph, and he is hence perpetually denominated by their poets ماه کنعان (Mahi Kenaan), ‘moon of Canaan;’ a phraseology which, together with the whole story of his temptation, imprisonment and future dignity, is become proverbial in their writings, and is figuratively applied to other persons, whether male or female, possessed of high personal beauty, or doomed to distress and captivity. Thus Hafiz:

ماه كنعان من مسند مصر آن تو شد
گاه آنست كه پدرود كني زندانرا

O moon of Canaan! Egypt's throne is thine,
Leave, leave thy chains—the fates propitious shine.

The moon is hence appropriated among Persian and Arabian poets as a general type for a beautiful countenance. Thus the same excellent lyrist in another gazel:

حریغی مهوشی ترکی قباپوش

*Fair as the moon, a maid of gentlest breast,
Lovely in form, in graceful tunic drest.*

So, in the commencement of book III. of the Mesnavi of Gelâleddîn:

هر کجا که یوسعی باشد چو ماه
جنت است آن ار جه باشد قعر جاه

*Where'er my lovely fair one dwells,
O'er the moon whose beauties shine,
Though condemned to darkest cells,
Eden there would still be mine.*

See also the fifth beit or stanza of the ode translated from Khakani in idyl IV. 3.

(³³) *Refulgent as the day.*] “Bright as the sun.” In the Bible version ‘clear;’ ברה ‘of unsullied splendor.’ So, in the magnificent language of Habakkuk iii. 3, 4:

God went forth from Teman,
The Holy One from mount Paran.
His majesty covered the heavens,
And his glory filled the earth.

HIS BRIGHTNESS WAS AS THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE SUN,
He had *beams of light* issuing from his hands.

So Isaiah xxiv. 23. in which the prophet employs both the
images introduced in our own text :

And the MOON shall be confounded, and the SUN ashamed ;
For the LORD of hosts shall reign on mount Sion,
And ' beam ' gloriously before his ancients in Jerusalem.

In like manner Ferdusi in his Shah nâmeh:

مسنیژه کجا دخت افراسیاب
درخشان کند ناغ چون آفتاب
ستاره دوم دختر کی نشین
همه با کنزان و با آفرین

Born of Afrasiab, there Manizha beams
Bright as the sun, o'er gardens, groves, and streams :
Her sister princess Sitara looks round,
Girt by her damsels, and *with glory* crowned.

So, in the Gítagóvinda of Jayadéva : ' My soul remembers
him—who *disperses the gloom with beams* from the jewels which
decorate his bosom, his wrists and his ankles : on whose fore-
head *shines a circlet* of sandal-wood which makes even the
moon contemptible when she sails through irradiated clouds.'
The frequent use of these magnificent metaphors among the

bards of Irán is objected to by M. de Voltaire ; who compares them, in consequence hereof, to the gaudy titles of their sultans ; not reflecting “ that every nation,” observes sir William Jones, “ has a set of images and expressions *peculiar to itself*, which arise from the difference of its climate, manners, and history.” Vol. iv. Essay on the Poetry of the Eastern Nations. But the images before us are not so *peculiar* to the Persians as this elaborate scholar seems to suspect ; for they are as common to the bards of the North as to those of the East, to the Celts as to the Asiatics. It is almost impossible to peruse a single page of Ossian without meeting with metaphors of a similar description. I now, at random, open the poem of Fingal, and read as follows : “ Far from the rest the son of Ossian comes ; *bright* in the smiles of youth, fair as *the first beams of the sun*. His long hair waves on his back ; his dark brow is half hid beneath his helmet : the sword hangs loose on the hero's side, and his spear *glitters* as he moves. I fled from his terrible eye, king of Temora ! ”—I again open the same poem at hazard, and find the ensuing paragraph : “ And thou, white-bosomed Bragela, mourn over the fall of my fame ; for, vanquished, I will never return to thee, thou *sun-beam* of Dunscaich.” In the same manner, a third time : “ The daughter of snow overheard, and left the hall of her secret sigh. *She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the east*. Loveliness was around her as *light*. Her steps were like the music of songs. She saw the youth and loved him. He was the stolen sigh of her soul. Her blue eyes rolled on him in secret ; and she blessed the chief of Morven.” Wherever indeed society is found in a simpler or more infantine state, its vocabulary must necessarily be extremely limited, and recourse must of consequence be perpetually

had to images or metaphors, of some sort or other, which hence become a kind of vocal hieroglyphics, to express many of the ideas which arise in the speaker's mind, and which the paucity of his language will not suffer him to explain otherwise. Hence, in its earlier ages, the dialect of every nation is highly metaphoric; and the metaphors in most frequent use are those derived from the more striking phenomena of nature, or which are of most general notoriety. The sun, moon, and stars, must necessarily therefore, as we find is precisely the fact, be of universal application, and more commonly resorted to than images of any other kind. As the heavenly bodies offer a different appearance, however, in different climates, they are adverted to by their respective bards for very different purposes. In the unclouded regions of Yemen and Iran they are generally confined in their comparison to the ideas of *splendor* and *glory*, of perfect purity and transcendent excellence:—but in the northern climates of Caledonia and Scandinavia, where their lustre is often picturesquely obscured by storms and exhalations, they offer a richness of coloring to the poet, of which in oriental countries he could have had no conception. Ossian will furnish us also with abundant instances in proof of this remark: thus “The soul of Nathos was sad, *like the sun in the day of mist*, when his face is watery and dim.” So when Cathmor interposes and silences two factious and contending chiefs, the poet tells us that “they sunk from the king on either side, *like two columns of morning mist when the sun rises between them on his glittering rocks*.” These images are given with classic purity and correctness: yet it is a correctness not always to be found in the poetic effusions of wild and uncultivated nations. Among such the chief aim is to communicate rather a bold outline of their ideas than a finished

picture. But as science augments and the vocabulary multiplies, the hieroglyphic character of a dialect gradually wears away — For, the lexicon now affording a distinct and appropriate term for every idea, and almost every shade of every idea, there is no necessity for resorting to those images by which they were antecedently interpreted. Language therefore, as it becomes more voluminous and consummate, becomes in the same proportion less bold and energetic: it employs metaphors more sparingly, but with more precision: it gains largely in purity, elegance, and the bulk of its lexicon, but it loses in laconic brevity, and the audacity of its illustrations.

(3+) *August as heaven when all its planets play.*] In the Bible version ‘terrible as an army with banners.’ The variation of image by which I have ventured to interpret the original ‘dazzling as “all” the “starry” hosts’ gives so magnificent a finish to the gradation of metaphors which precede it, and is, at the same time, so capable of being supported by the text, that I cannot do otherwise than unite with Dr. Percy, in thus far deviating from the common version. “If we examine the original,” says this accomplished critic, “I think it will be found to exhibit the meaning here assigned. The word נדגלות “bannered troops” is allowed to be synonymous to צבא, “an host” or “army.” Now the stars and celestial orbs collectively are scarce ever expressed in scripture by any other name than צבא השמים, “the host of heavens:” and if the word השמים “heavens” be dropt, then simply by the plural צבאות “hosts;” for so a learned expositor interprets that frequent expression, “the LORD of

hosts." Deus Zabachth, says he, dicitur dominus exercituum ;
 cujus exercitus est sol, luna, stellæ, &c. qui excubias agunt in
 ordine suo. (Avenarius apud Robertson.) If this exposition
 be allowed, then צבאות stands simply for the heavenly orbs,
 as here נדגלות is presumed to do in the text : and Soloman
 will be found to have preferred the latter word, though less
 usual, with great propriety, as it best expresses that glittering
 appearance in an host or army to which the comparison
 peculiarly refers. As for צבאות, it is interpreted by the
 lexicographers : Exercitus, copiarum militantium et strenuè per-
 ficientium functiones ad quas sunt vocati : ita ut STELLÆ
 ordinatæ tanquam in militia dicuntur exercitus Domini, ut
 1 Sam. v. 10. Jehova deus exercituum : et per ellipsin, Je-
 hova exercituum, 1 Sam. i. 3. Vide plura in Robertsoni
 Thesaur. 860. 862.' This defence is so ingenious and, in
 my opinion, so complete, that it requires no additional com-
 ment.

I will only add, that in the following magnificent picture of
 the beautiful Zuleikha's quitting her morning couch (a descrip-
 tion of the accomplished Jami) we have in some degree a
 cluster of the same sublime images :

نقاب از لاله تیراب بکشان
 خار آلوده چشم از خواب بکشان
 کر یبان مطلع خورشید و مد کرد
 ز مطلع سر زده هر سو نکد کرد

Woke by their kisses, from her cheeks she threw
The filmy veil that hid their languid hue;
And, like the tulip, moist with morning spray,
Her eyes, yet dim, half-opened to the day.
From her rich robe the *sun* and *moon* arose;—
Her couch she quits—and *heaven her looks disclose*.

NOTES ON IDYL VIII.

(¹) *Down to the nut-crowned gardens did I stray.*] It is generally imagined that the phrase גַּנַּת אֲגוּז, 'garden of nuts' means a 'garden of hazle-trees'; and it is added by Dr. Percy, that as the corylus, or hazle-tree, is a plant which delights in a cold climate, it must have been esteemed in the gardens of Solomon as a rare and curious exotic. In the Septuagint, however, instead of "garden of nuts," we find it "garden of almonds;" and there can be no doubt that the Hebrew term אֲגוּז rather applies to the almond than to the hazle. The verb גָּזַז means, nevertheless, 'to shear,' 'prune,' or 'keep in order;' and of course designates generally a pleasure-garden of any kind in exquisite perfection. If the word אֲגוּז can be supposed to be synonymous with the English term *nuts*, it must, like the latter, be a generic expression, and equally applicable to the hazle, the almond, the cocoa, the walnut, the chesnut, and every other species of fruit which is inclosed in a strong capsular, drupous or avellaneous pericarpium. I have observed in idyl II. (¹⁰), that the term 'apple' is employed with a latitude quite as extensive both in Hebrew and English.

(²) *And there to grant thee every pledge of love.*] I have followed several prior commentators in supplying this verse

from the Septuagint, in which it occurs thus: *Εκει δωσω τους μαστους μου σοι*. It is in like manner introduced into the Arabic and the Ethiopic versions. Thus the latter: *ՀԱՐՀ : ՀԴՂԻԴ : ԴՂԴԴԴ ::* It has however been unaccountably suppress in the Hebrew copies, and does not occur in the Syriac. The context shows, nevertheless, that it once constituted a part of the royal bride's address to her attendants; and for want of its restoration, the commentators, who have continued to omit it, have been uniformly perplexed as to the meaning of the entire idyl. 'Readily,' says Melesigenio, 'would I hence make a leap to verse the seventh of the ensuing chapter, if it were equally permitted to a translator as to an original writer, to pass unnoticed over what he cannot hope to explain—*che non espera nitescere posse*. The passage thus amended, however, will, I trust, in no small degree tend to render such a leap unnecessary.

(³) *Swift as Aminadib's triumphant car?*] The expression is elliptic, and the occasion justifies its brevity. Its meaning is however obvious: 'I was not aware of the timidity of my mind, which hurried me away from my engagement, when in the very act of adhering to it, with the rapidity of the chariot of Aminadib!—Of Aminadib, who appears, like Jehu, to have been one of the most celebrated charioteers of his day, we know nothing more than is here glanced at: and as the Hebrew term is, in many manuscripts, divided into two words, *עמי נדיב*, 'Ami nadib,' in which collocation it has a different meaning than when united as above, and implies, instead of the name of a person, the phrase 'of my willing' or 'loyal' peo-

ple;—it is a division which has been followed by many translators. Thus Dr. Hodgson :

Unexpectedly methought were drawn out for me
The chariots of my loyal people.

Such a sense however, if sense it may be called, I confess I do not understand. It is, nevertheless, thus rendered in the Syriac, *Nescivit anima mea, posuit me in curru populi parati.*

וְאֵלֶּיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ

.אֵלֶּיךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ ; בְּבֵרֵךְ , לְבָרֵךְ , אֵלֶּיךָ .

And the Jews have followed it in their Spanish version, dated according to their own æra, 5466: *Nose: mi alma me púzo quatreguas de pueblo liberal.* The Æthiopic, Arabic, and Septuagint, are coincident with the common reading, or that retained in the text.

(4) *Return, O bride of Soloman!*—] In the Bible version, ‘Return, return, O SHULAMITE!’ Of the meaning of this word we can form no other conception than that now offered. Soloman is in the Hebrew שלמה (Shelma or Sheloma); and שולמית (Shulmit or Shulamite), which is merely the same word with a feminine termination, is, of course, necessarily, equivalent to *wife* or *bride of Soloman*. The reply of the attendant virgins is in perfect consonance with the following address of the companion of Rhádá to her heavenly mistress: “Delay not, O loveliest of women! follow the lord of thy heart: behold, he seeks the appointed shade, bright with the ornaments of love, and confident of the promised bliss.” *Songs of Jayadéva.*

(⁵) *Firm as in battle each conflicting host.*] This interpretation is, I think, clear and appropriate כַּמְחִלַת הַמַּחֲנִים, Sicut chorum castrorum : and the Syriac and Æthiopic meet it with but little variation. Thus the latter: ܡܠܝܬ : ܬܠܝܬ : ܡܠܝܬ : ܬܠܝܬ :: Quid videbitis in Sulamitide quæ venit sicut chori castrorum? "What see ye in the Shulamite, who approacheth like squadrons from their encampments?" i. e. "like antagonist squadrons to battle." The meaning is far clearer nevertheless when the sentence is divided, as in the Bible version, or the present text: and the force of the simile may be pertinently illustrated by the following stanza from the Jerusalem Delivered, for which Tasso has been largely indebted however to Virgil. Cant. ix. 52.

Come pari d'ardir, con forza pare
 Quinci austro in guerra vien, quindi, aquilone:
 Non ei fra lor, non cede il cielo, o'l mare;
 Ma nube a nube, e flutto a flutto oppone.
 Così nè ceder qua, nè là piegare
 Si vede l'ostinata aspra tenzone.
 S'affronta insieme orribilmente urtando
 Scudo a scudo, elmo ad elmo, e brando a brando.

As when with equal ardor, equal might,
 Auster and Boreas join the jealous fight,
 Nor this nor that submits—through skies and main
 Clouds still with clouds, with surges surges strain;
 So here, in firm and obstinate array,
 Devoid of triumph hangs th' unyielding fray:

With balanced fury each his faulchion wields,
Helms clash with helms, and shields with thundering shields.

The passage in the original is nevertheless capable of a version somewhat different; and is thus given in the Bible of the Spanish Jews printed at Amsterdam, anno 5466, according to their own æra: Torna, torna la Sulamit, y vereimos en ti; que vereis en la Solamit? *como danza de los reales*. It must be allowed indeed that מחולל signifies a rapid but graceful rencounter, such as is exhibited in the figure of a *country* or *contre-dance*. Dr. Hodgson varies the translation in the following manner:

She is as the trumpet when armies stand ready for battle.

The word מחלל is used undoubtedly in some instances to signify a musical instrument; but we cannot to a certainty say that this instrument was a trumpet.

As this Idyl is short, I shall transcribe the entire version of it by Duport, as a specimen of his general elegance.

Hortulum intravi nucibus refertum,
Vallium fruges cupiens videre, an
Floreat vitis mea, germinetve
Punica malus.

Mox repentino cor amoris æstro
Percitum, et raptum me inopina sensi,
Fervidis acsi veherer quadrigis
Amminadabi.

Quin redi, formosa, redi, puella,
Quin redi mox, O Sulamitis alma;
Ut tuo aspectu proprius fruamur.

Quid Sulamitis

En habet speve hâc, oculisve dignum,
Quod flagratis sic studio videndi?
Prælio binas acies paratas

Ordine pulchro.

NOTES ON IDYL IX.

(¹) *How fair, O princess, are thy sandalled feet !*] Magnificent sandals constituted, in the East, a part of the dress of both males and females who could afford such a luxury. I have already noticed it, with respect to the former, in Idyl VII. (¹⁸) but the oriental ladies were peculiarly attentive to this fashionable ornament. The sandals of Judith were so brilliant that, notwithstanding the general splendor of her bracelets, rings, and necklace, these principally succeeded in captivating the ferocious Holofernes ; for we are expressly told that “her sandals ravished his eyes.” Compare Judith x. 4. with xvi. 9. So Lucretius *Rer. Nat.* iv. 1119.

———— pulchra in pedibus Sicyonia rident.

———— sandals rich

Laugh from her feet by Sicyon artists wrought.

It is obvious, from the character under which the royal bride is here addressed, that of *princess* or *prince's daughter*, that she was of noble descent. Many commentators have, indeed, endeavoured to deduce, from this appellation, that she was the daughter of Pharaoh king of Egypt ; but I have already noticed a variety of circumstances in the Preface, and shall have occasion to revert to them in several of the ensuing idyls, which evidently contradict such an idea : and, in fact, the very term here translated *prince* (נדיב) implies rather mere *nobility* than absolute *royalty* of birth ; a “chief,” a “ruler,” a “noble” ; and can only thus be interpreted Psalm xlvii. 9 ; as it is thus actually translated Isaiah xiii. 2.

It is also obvious that the scene of the present idyl is a private bagnio or bath; probably constructed in some secluded part of the royal pleasure-grounds, and unquestionably equaling the magnificence of any which are still traced in modern Asia. To this sequestered building the accomplished fair one retired with her attendants; and it is here she once more receives the royal bridegroom, after having indulged in the luxury of bathing, and re-adorned herself anterior to his admission. The exquisite beauty and proportion of her features excite the eulogy of her attendants as they undress her.

(²) *The graceful goblet* —————] The vessel here referred to in the way of comparison was probably of pottery or porcelain, in the manufactory of which the artists of many ancient nations acquired a perfection and elegance of design that is altogether unrivalled in the present day. Those of Mr. Wedgwood's which are introduced into the British Museum are, unquestionably, of exquisite workmanship, and do credit to the nation in which they have been formed; but the model and finish of the Roman antiques by which they are placed are so superior as to excite the preference of the most careless spectator. On the perfection of the ancients in the arts of pottery, painting, and many sister elegancies, the reader may advantageously consult two successive and elaborate treatises on this subject by M. Ameilhon, inserted in *Memoirs of the French National Institute, Literat. et Beaux Arts*, tom. i. & iii. and entitled *Recherches sur les Couleurs des Anciens & sur les Arts qui y ont rapport*. The comparison of a graceful and delicate waist to a vessel thus elegantly moulded is curiously pertinent and happy.

(³) ————— *vies not with thy waist.*] The Hebrew word שרר here translated *waist*, in its more confined and literal

signification implies *navel*; and the Bible version therefore reads thus: 'Thy *navel* is "like" a round goblet, "which" wanteth not liquor.' But what are we to understand by such a reading? The entire passage has to this hour puzzled the whole host of critics: though I think nothing can be more obvious than its meaning in the original. I allow that the term שרר implies literally the *navel*; but I contend that it is often figuratively used, as in the present version, for the *waist* at large, or the whole of the surrounding region—and this with great pertinence and beauty; the one constituting the fountain of life in the fœtus, the other in the adult, and the former being at all times the most prominent organ of the latter. It is in this sense employed Job xl. 16. in which place it is introduced in direct apposition with the word *loins*, our own figurative term for the same idea. Here, speaking of the behemoth, the Almighty exclaims ואנו בשרירי בטנו

Behold his strength is in his loins—i. e. his back,
And his virility in the *navel* of his belly, i. e. in his *waist*.

In a similar acceptation the word שרר or *navel* is employed in Prov. iii. 7. and for want of attention to this remark the passage has never been fully understood to the present moment:

It shall be health (*fertility*) to thy *waist*,
And marrow to thy bones.

The common rendering is, *It shall be health to thy NAVE*L: but incapable of eliciting any meaning from such a phraseology, our modern critics have suspected an error in the Hebrew term; and that instead of *lesoreca* 'to thy navel' the royal moralist, consistently indeed with the Syriac version, originally

wrote *lesereca* 'to thy flesh;' an alteration not supported I believe by any ancient print or manuscript, and which the present interpretation renders altogether unnecessary. Divested of poetical imagery, what are the blessings here predicted? The very two which, in a temporal view, the Hebrews were accustomed to regard as the chief which could be bestowed upon them:

Numerous shall be thy family,
And many the years of thine own life.

In commenting upon the opening of the present idyl, Patrick, Harmer, and Parkhurst have conceived that the royal poet, instead of delineating the personal charms, 'the *unbought* graces' of his accomplished fair, is merely describing her different habiliments with the splendid figures which were wrought on them. Against such an interpretation I cannot but strongly protest, as equally unpoetical, and unjust to the text. In the literal sense of the original I see no indelicacy whatever, and there ought to be no indelicacy in its translation. The royal bard is merely assuming a liberty, and that in the chastest manner possible, which we are daily conceding in our own age to every painter and sculptor of eminence.

(*) *And filled with fertile juices to the heart,* } From the ex-
Dearer than aught the goblet can impart. } ternal shape of
the graceful goblet the poet continues his simile with great dexterity and advantage to its internal contents; and, in the true spirit of his art, predicts to the royal bride, through the medium of her companions, the possession of that blessing of fertility which was regarded by every Hebrew lady as of inestimable value.

(5) *Thy swelling bosom teems with nurture sweet.*] Here again I am compelled to deviate from the common version, and the interpretation of every prior commentator, as offering a sense which I confess I either do not understand, or see obvious reason for rejecting. The Hebrew term בֶּטֶן, here translated *bosom*, might more strictly and literally perhaps be rendered *belly*, and is thus interpreted in our English bibles—“thy *belly* “is like” a heap of wheat.’ But even the English term *belly* is divided by anatomists into *upper* and *lower*—the former being appropriated to the chest or præcordia, and the latter to the abdominal region. Now the Hebrew term בֶּטֶן not only admits of this latitude of interpretation—but is occasionally employed, and particularly in the writings of Solomon, in passages in which to translate it otherwise than by the term *bosom* or *heart* would be to subvert the very meaning of the writer himself. What are we to understand by the common rendering of *belly* in Job xv. 35. in which the same word occurs in the original?

They conceive mischief and bring forth vanity:
And their *belly* prepareth deceit.

So Prov. xviii. 8.

The words of the tale-bearer are wounds,
And penetrate the inmost recesses of the *belly*.

Again, in the same book, chap. xx. 27.

The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord
Searching all the inmost recesses of the *belly*.

Who does not perceive that, in all these instances, the sacred writers intend the *heart*, or rather the *bosom*, and not the *belly*

strictly so called, and that the passages should have been thus translated?

Again: in Prov. xxii. 17, 18. where the same word occurs in the original, it would have been truly ludicrous to have interpreted it in the ordinary manner, and our Bible translators have therefore exchanged the word *belly* for the circuitous phrase *within thee*. Yet how much more elegant as well as more correct to have rendered it thus:

Bend thine ear, and attend to the words of the wise,
And apply thine heart unto my instructions:
For pleasant 'shall they be' if thou retain them in thy *bosom*;
They shall, moreover, be ornamental in thy lips.

The *belly* may unquestionably be compared to a heap of wheat—but how much more graceful and appropriate is the simile which applies it to the *bosom* (each equally overflowing with milky nutriment), and which resembles their supreme points, or palpitating nipples, with the dun-coloured areola which surrounds them, to two twin fawns of the roe!—The whole description indeed is only an iteration of the same exquisite passage as it occurs in Idyl V. (16), yet varied in one or two of its expressions, consistently with the common usage of our poet, to evince the richness of his fancy: and it is almost demonstrative that the term *lilies* at least should be applied, in the present case, to the *bosom*, and not to the *belly*, since such is its application in the former instance.

It is impossible indeed that the common version can be correct, as it necessarily implies that corpulency was fashionable among the Hebrew ladies, as we are told it is at present among those of Turkey. This in truth has been suspected;

but with what a deviation from positive fact, as well as with what a libel upon the more elegant taste of the Asiatics, we may readily determine from every existing comparison which relates to their shape and proportion; and which decisively proves that a graceful slenderness, and majestic height of stature, and not corporeal obesity, were the devout wishes of their heart. The true eastern beauty is therefore represented in the present, and in almost all other Asiatic poems, as being light as a fawn, tall as a cypress or cedar, erect as a palm-tree, slender as an arrow. The elegant slenderness of the beautiful Rádhá is peculiarly specified by her poet Jayadéva; and its eulogy constitutes, as I have already observed Idyl II. (9), a part of one of his most frequent choruses or periodic iterations: "Surely thou descendest from heaven, o *slender* damsel! attended by a company of youthful goddesses; and all their beauties are collected in thee." So even a Turkish poet himself, Mohammed Ben Abdallah el Catib, who thus delineates the damsel of his choice:

مهفته بیضاء غیر مفاضة
تراپیها مصقولة کا لسنجنگل

A slender maid, uncorpulent, and light,
Whose polished bosom blinds the gazer's sight.

And again, in the same gazel :

وکشم لطیف کالجذیل مخصر

Her waist was slender as the spiry cord.

I repeat, therefore, that the common translation of this exquisite portion of the Song of Songs cannot possibly be correct. Should any critic, however, be too fastidious to admit of the version here contended for in its stead, I would propose to him a total change in the punctuation of the entire passage, by which much of the obscurity and incongruity of the Bible rendering may be dispersed, though it will by no means possess the full beauty of the sense offered in the present text. The passage, as it has hitherto been read, is divided thus:

שררך אגן הסהר
אליחסר חמוג: בטנך
ערמת חטים סוגה
בשושנים: שני שדיך
כשני עפרם תאמי צביה

Umbilicus tuus, crater rotundus,
Non indigebit temperamento. Tuus venter
Acervus triticorum circumseptus
Liliis. Duo ubera tua
Sicut duo hinnuli, gemelli capreæ.

Into this accustomed punctuation I would introduce the following change:

שררך אגן הסהר:
אליחסר חמוג בטנך:
ערמת חטים סוגה
בשושנים שני שדיך:
כשני עפרם תאמי צביה

Umbilicus tuus crater rotundus.

Non indigebit temperamento tuus venter.

Acervus triticorum, circumseptus

Liliis, duo ubera tua;

Sicut duo hinnuli, gemelli capreæ.

Thus divided, the literal English is as follows; premising that, although the word *belly* might now be retained, it may be more delicately exchanged for that of *womb*, which the Hebrew בֶּטֶן as well as the Greek $\kappa\omicron\iota\lambda\iota\alpha$ implies equally with the former sense:

Thy waist is a goblet well-turned;

Thy *womb* shall not fail in its office;

A heap of wheat, circumvested

With lilies, are thy two breasts:

‘Soft’ as two twins ‘which are’ fawns of the roe.

I will only add to this note, that it was customary among the Jews, as appears from Ruth iii. 7. and Hagg. ii. 16, to lay their wheat in heaps when first threshed out and fanned: which heaps, as it is ingeniously supposed by Lamy, were sportively strewed over, during the joyous time of harvest, with flowers of different descriptions, and especially with lilies.

(6) *Rises majestic as an ivory tower.*] This part of the description, like that which precedes it, is also an iteration from Idyl V., in which an accustomed variation is indulged, to prove the luxuriance of the poet's imagination. In Idyl V. the lovely neck of the royal bride is compared to ‘the tower

of David:’ in the present instance the resemblance is to ‘a tower of ivory.’ Each of the two similes has an appropriate beauty. In the former case she was completely arrayed in the full splendor of her jewels, and beamed with all the radiance of the polished armory with which the consummate structure of the tower of David was decorated. In the latter, she is divested of every adventitious ornament, and the native *ivory* of her neck is alone conspicuous.

So Anacreon in his portraiture of Bathyllus, od. xxix.

Τον Αδωνιδος παρελθων
Ελεφαντινος τραχηλος.

But never can thy pencil trace
His *ivory neck* of Paphian grace.

(7) *Than, by Bath-rabbim, Heshbon's limpid stream.*] Heshbon was originally a city of the Moabites: from this people it was conquered by the Amorites in the reign of Sihon, and fell into the possession of Israel upon their triumph over the Amorite prince. It was admirably supplied with springs, of which that by the gate of Bath-rabbim was probably the most celebrated, and was highly estimated for the fertility and verdure of its plantations. Hence the lamentation of the prophet in consequence of a season of destructive drought; Isa. xvi. 8, 9.

The plantations of Heshbon are stricken,
The vine of Sidmah languisheth.—
With the grief of Jazer will I bewail the vine of Sidmah;
I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon!—

For the 'joyous' shout of thy summer-fruits,
And of thy harvest, is laid low.

(⁸) *Th' unrivalled tower o'er Lebanon discerned.*] The tower of Lebanon, like that of David, was a *projection* of admirable symmetry and elegance: the beauty of the comparison is therefore obvious.

(⁹) *Thy head is Carmel* —————] There were two mountains of this name; the one situated in the south of Palestine, crowned with a city denominated from itself; the other rising from the shores of the Mediterranean midway between Ptolemaïs and Dora. Both mountains were celebrated for their fertility: and hence their appellation; the word Carmel in the original Hebrew (כרמל) implying this idea. Of these mountains the former is unquestionably referred to in the present passage; the verdant and flowery forests and other picturesque beauties of which presented perpetual sources of imagery to the sacred bards.

(¹⁰) *In purple decked* —————] The original is of doubtful interpretation; for it is uncertain whether the word דלת here translated *tresses*, and which is no where else to be met with, refer to the hair itself, or to those

————— anademata, mitræ,

“ornamental fillets, and playful head-dresses,” which were invented as profusely in former times as at present. The Bible version adopts the former idea, ‘the hair of thine head is like purple;’ and much learned labor has been bestowed by seve-

ral commentators, who prefer this reading, in endeavouring to prove that the hair most esteemed among the Greeks was tinged of this hue, either entirely or intermixed with black:— in the language of a celebrated critic, *introrsus quidem nigras, ad extremum vero rutilantes seu cum florido Tyriæ conchæ colore certantes*. Calist. apud Cleric.: “Black towards the roots, but of a deep auburn, or colored with the Tyrian murex, towards the extremities:” while Michaëlis suspects that the word אֶרְנָמָן refers rather to the beautiful spiral form of the conch itself than to the color which was obtained from it; and conceives that the tresses of the royal bride were braided into this elegant figure. Of these different opinions the last appears to me rather an ingenious conceit than a probable conjecture: and, as I have already observed Idyl VII. (11), that whatever may have been the fact with respect to the Greeks, which is nevertheless still doubtful, the favorite color of the hair in the time of Solomon, as well as in later periods, among the most polished oriental nations, was not purple, but pure jetty black, I have inclined to the first interpretation.

(11) *Arrest the monarch, and his heart enslave.*] ‘The king is held captive in their flowing ringlets.’ In the original as follows :

מֶלֶךְ אֶסּוּר בִּרְדֵּימִים

which in the Bible version is rendered “the king is held in the galleries;” and by Dr. Percy, “Lo! the king is detained in the antechamber:” while Mr. Green, not knowing what to make of the passage, has unjustifiably omitted it altogether. It is elegantly and poetically rendered by Duport: “The panting

monarch clings to the walks or galleries of thy lovely form, as though bound to them with fetters."

In ambulacris formæ inhians tuæ
Rex, ceu ligatus compede, permanet.

Michaëlis offers another interpretation: "The king is encircled in an upright (or erect) turban:" and Houbigant, uniting the present and prior parts of the verse, explains it, *cirri capitis tui velut purpura regia, nodo pendens ex laquearibus*: "The tresses of thy head are like the royal purple, hanging in festoons from the ceilings."

There is no doubt, I think, that Houbigant is correct in thus uniting the two members of the verse; but רהטם must suffer much contortion to be forced into the sense of *ceilings*; its more obvious meaning being *outer galleries*, when applied to a building; or *external ornaments surrounding* an object, when employed more generally: in consequence of which Dr. Hodgson has offered the version introduced into the present text; observing justly that רהט the Chaldee radix of רהטם signifies *cucurrit*; and that hence the expression, when applied to the hair, seems to denote its waving and flowing loosely over the shoulders.

I have the more readily embraced this elegant interpretation because it presents an idea in perfect consonance with oriental poetry, which is perpetually representing the tresses of the fair as the nets or toils of Love, or the ambush in which he lies concealed. Thus Jami in his يوسف وزليخا (Joseph and Zuleikha) cap. i.:

چو بر زلف پري رويان نهسي بند
 بر نخير جنون آفتد خرد مسند
 و گر زآن زلف بندي بر کشايي
 چراغ عقل يابد روشنايي

When Love in graceful ringlets plants his toils,
 The fool he catches, and the wise man foils :
 But, thence released, the sage his *snare* discerns,
 And Reason's lamp with wonted lustre burns.

So Rafia in his luxurious delineation of Casmir :

کمند کيسوي مشکين دلربا يانش
 هزار حلقه بران همچو حلقه رنجير

A thousand *secret snares, like links* entwined,
 Lurk in those ringlets waving to the wind.

This conceit is not uncommon to modern poets,—though I think those of Spain have evinced more partiality for it than the writers of any other country. Thus the gallant Garcilaso :

De los cabellos de oro fue *texida*
La red que fabricó mi sentimiento.

Those aureat locks *the net enwove*
That bind my suffering soul to Love.

In like manner the count de Noroña, who promises, in the present day, to restore to his countrymen no small portion of the classic taste they have long lost :

He visto que Cupido
Jugaba entre unas hebras,
Largas, y finas, donde
El amante se *enreda*.

Love I've seen with wanton winglets
Sporting mid the fair one's ringlets,
Fluent, fine, and *like a net*
For the careless lover set.

It becomes me to state, at the same time, that the Syriac version, though it incline chiefly to that of Houbigant, gives a different sense to the entire passage from any I have yet offered : and a sense, moreover, so uniform and perspicuous that it would be unpardonable not to notice it :

و دعبب لالاب { دعبب دن صلا. هت
هلا , ; دعبب { دعبب ; دعبب
مذددا , { دعبب دن صلا.

The difference in the Arabic is but trifling; though I believe there is no other version that coincides with the Syriac. In the Arabic it occurs thus :

راسل عليط كجبل الكرمل و ضفر راسل
كبر فپر ملل مربوط في الملح عب

The literal rendering is as follows: "Thine erect head is like Carmel: and the braided tresses of thy head as the *royal purple* (*purple of the king*) *suspended over theatres of entertainment*;" i. e. "equally refulgent and glossy." The custom here referred to is still common in the East. The gardens and groves of the opulent were screened from the meridian heat of the sun, by hangings of exquisite workmanship, of which mention is made, 2 Kings, xxiii. 7., and which equally preserved the verdure of the scenery, and afforded a refreshing shade to those who chose to loiter or stretch themselves beneath its luxury. The open theatres of the Romans were elegantly covered over in the same manner, and for the same purpose, as we learn from Lucretius, iv. 73.

Et volgo faciunt id lutea, russaque vela,
Et ferrugina, quom magnis intenta theatris,
Per malos volgata, trabiesque, trementia fluctant.
Namque ibi concessum caveaï subter, et omnem
Scenalem speciem, patrum, matrumque, deorumque,
Inficiunt, coguntque suo fluitare colore :
Et, quanto circum mage sunt inclusa theatri

Mœnia, tam magis hæc intus, perfusa lepore,
Omnia conrident, conrepta luce dici.

—————This the crowd surveys
Oft in the theatre, whose curtains broad,
Bedeckt with crimson, yellow, or the tint
Of steel cerulean, from their fluted heights
Wave tremulous ; and o'er the scene beneath,
Each marble statue, and the rising rows
Of rank and beauty, fling their tint superb.
While, as the walls with ampler shade repel
The garish noon-beam, every object round
Laughs with a deeper dye, and wears profuse
A lovelier lustre ravished from the day.

(13) *Graceful thy form the stately palm above.*] The cedar, the cypress, the pine and the palm tree, from their general beauty, and more especially their erect and stately growth, offer a common source of imagery for elegance and dignity of person among oriental poets. Thus the son of Sirach, who is a frequent copyist of the royal bard, in his delineation of Wisdom, Eccles. xxiv. 13, 14.:

I was erect as a *cedar* of Lebanon ;
As a *cypress* upon the mountains of Hermon :
I was erect as a *palm-tree* in En-gedi.

So the enamoured Hafiz :

دل صنو بربم همچو بيد در لزانست
ز حسرت قد و بالاي چو صنوبر دوست

Like the reed my heart trembles, in hopes to possess
That soft-waving *pine-tree*, and close its distress.

In like manner Khakani:

ماه نیکو نیست ولی روی تو زیباتر از
وست
سرو دلجو نیست ولی قد تو دلجو تر از
وست

Bright is the moon, but brighter still thy face;
The graceful *cypress* yields to thee in grace.

The Greeks have not been inattentive to this exuberant source of poetic ornament. I have already observed in Idyl II. (1), that Theocritus chose the *cypress* as most expressive of the form of the beautiful Helen; and Homer is well known to have compared, in like manner, the beautiful Nausicaa to the very tree selected in our text, Odys. Z. 162.

Γουνουμαι σε, ανασσα
Δηλω δη ποτε τοιον Απολλωνος παρα βωμω
Φεινικος νεον ερνος ανερχομενον ενοησα.

Thus seems the *palm* with stately honors crowned
By Phœbus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground,
The pride of Delos.

POPE.

It is obvious, therefore, as I have already observed in note (5) of the present idyl, that majesty of height, and a graceful slenderness rather than a corpulent prominence of waist, constituted the shape equally coveted in Greece and Asia. The very word תָּמָר (Tamar), indeed, which is that used in the passage before us for *palm-tree*, and whose radical meaning is *straight* or *upright* (whence it was afterwards applied to pillars or columns as well as to the palm), was also a general name among the ladies of Palestine, and unquestionably adopted in honor of the stature they had already acquired, or gave a fair promise of attaining.

(13) *Thy swelling bosom than its clustering fruit.*] ‘And thy bosom clusters “of dates.” The Bible version reads erroneously ‘clusters of grapes:’ the fruit of the palm-tree is the date. Camoens, in equally glowing colors, has a similar allusion, *Lusiad. cant. ix.*

Encostase no chão, que está caindo
A cidreira, e os pesos amarelos,
Os fermosos limones alli cheirando
Estão virgineas tetas imitando.

Near to the ground each spreading bough descends ;
Beneath her yellow fruit the citron bends :
The fragrant lemon scents the coolly grove
Fair as, when ripening for the days of love,
The virgin's breasts the gentle swell avow—
So the twin fruitage swell on every bough.

MICKLE.

(14) *More dear to me thy bosom than the sight.*] So the impassioned Hafiz in the following verses, whose iteration I have endeavoured to preserve in the translation subjoined :

دل و دینم دل و دینم ببر داشت
 برو ووشش بسر ووشش برو ووشش
 دواي یو دواي تست حافظ
 لب نوشش لب نوشش لب نوش

On that neck and that bosom, that bosom and neck,
 All my heart, all my heart, and religion I wreck,—
 Dost thou ask for thy balsam, O poet renowned!
 In her lip, her moist lip, her lip only 'tis found.

(15) *Hailed by the lips, the palate as it flows.*] The whole of this passage, including the present and two prior verses, has an obscurity in the original which has much perplexed the commentators. In the Bible version it is given thus: "And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine, for my beloved that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak." There is no doubt that by the phrase "roof of thy mouth" is meant thy *speech* or *voice*, the cause or organ of articulation being put for the effect, or the articulation itself: and it is in this sense understood by Houbigant, who thus proposes to amend the entire passage וחכך כיון הטוב הולך לחכי למשרים רובב שפתי ושנים Et palatum (sc. eloquium) tuum quasi vinum dulce, in palatum meum intrans

suaviter, adrepens leniter intra labia et dentes. The alteration, however, of לְדֹרִי (for my *beloved*) into לְחִנִּי ('through my palate') is not only unjustifiably bold, but altogether unnecessary; since, as is well observed by Dr. Percy, we may with Junius and Tremellius consider לְדֹרִי as in the plural number, *ad amores* (*deliciously*); the final ם being cut off by apocope, *euphoniæ gratia*; in which adverbial sense the ensuing word is also to be understood לְמִשְׁרִים *iens amantissime rectissimeque*. The term יְשָׁנִים *dormientium* ('of those that are asleep') is written in the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, as well as by Aquila and Symmachus, וְשָׁנִים *et dentes* ('and the teeth'); and I have followed these authorities, as offering a sense more obvious than the former. The common reading, however, is neither destitute of meaning nor of force; and implies wine of so excellent a flavor as to induce those who have indulged in it to dream of it, and converse concerning it while dreaming; or else to excite them to drink of it to excess, in consequence of which they fall asleep from inebriation, and disclose the subject of their dreams in audible speech. This last version, which is adopted by the translators of our English Bible, is also adhered to by Dr. Hodgson and Melesigenio; the latter of whom interprets the passage, with rather too much poetical paraphrase, as follows:

E umor, qual vino egregio,
Mandi tua bocca fuora
A farsi incontro a' bacci miei soave,
Che fra le labbra ancora

Di chi di sonna è carco
Dolcemente serpendo apresi il varco.

It is given in like manner by Duport :

———— placide fluens

Permulcet os, et dormientum

Prolicit e labiis loquelam.

NOTES ON IDYL X.

(¹) *I am my love's, and my beloved mine.*] In the Hebrew we have only "I am my beloved's:"—but as the latter member of the sentence occurs in both the passages whence the whole appears to have been iterated, (Idyl III. p. 16. and VII. p. 38.), I have followed Mr. Green in supplying what should seem to be a defect arising from the carelessness of transcribers.

(²) *To him each wish, each impulse I resign.*] "To him my desire is obedient." In the Bible version the passage is given thus—"his desire is towards me." Dr. Hodgson has justly observed that the Hebrew תשוקה here, in Gen. iii. 16. and in several other places, translated *desire*, implies rather *dependence* or *obedience*: and he accordingly renders the passage—"to him *obedient* is my will." The variation of "to *him* my will" or "desire," instead of "his *towards me*," is supported by this authority; that, in one manuscript, instead of ועלי we find ועליו; and, in three, instead of תשוקתו we find תשוקתי: which readings appear rightly to agree with, and to fortify the construction offered in the present text.

(³) *Sweet mandrakes there the beating bosom burn.*] We know little or nothing of the plant the earlier Hebrew writers intended by the term דודאים (dudaim) here translated man-

drakes: and Junius, Tremellius, and Piscator have therefore rendered it generally *amabiles flores*, “love-exciting flowers; which is still further softened by Dr. Percy, who merely interprets it “*the sweetest flowers*.” As however the Septuagint and all the ancient versions have adopted the word mandrakes (*μανδραγοραι*), I have not found myself at liberty to substitute any other botanical term. That a flower and fruit of this denomination are still common in Palestine is well known from the testimony of Hasselquist, Maundrell, and other travellers; and that this plant is supposed to be a love-philtre we have little doubt from the positive declaration of the Samaritan chief priest to the latter. But the strong fetid smell which it effuses, and which is admitted by every traveller, appears so contrary to what we should expect from a plant which in the present case is enumerated among those which were most delicious and inviting, that it is most probable the ancient and modern mandrakes were of a different botanic species, if not of a different family. That the former, however, like the latter, was conceived to possess prolific qualities, is highly probable; and the passage is therefore well paraphrased by Michaëlis as follows: *Jam et somnifero odore, venerus mandragoras, late olens, spirat suadetque amores*: “Now widely exhaling its somniferous fragrance, the voluptuous mandrakes breathe and excite to love,”

(4) *Fruits fresh and old beneath th' embowering shade.*] ‘And in our bower are all delicious “fruits, both” new and old.’ In the Bible version it is, ‘and at our gates are all manner of delicious “fruits” new and old.’ In the original it is ‘all manner of *delicacies*,’ מַנְדִּים; but as it is probable from *Idyl II.* p. 12. that these delicacies were citrons and other refreshing

fruits of a similar kind, I have preserved the common interpretation. The phrase על פתחינו generally translated 'at' or 'over our gates,' seems to refer to the same sort of latticed bower, or 'house of delight,' which is described in Idyl III. (2), and which was probably a retired chiosk or arbor: and the entire eclogue, which may vie, for general beauty and strength of coloring, with any in the whole collection or diwan—obviously implies that the royal bride had now recovered the resolution which had abruptly forsaken her in Idyl VIII. and had prepared herself for the interview from which she had previously fled.

(5) *And, taught by her* —————] Nothing seems to me more plain and obvious than the meaning of this sentence in the original—and yet so obscure has it appeared to almost every preceding commentator and interpreter, that every one has differed from every one in expounding its sense. In the Bible version it occurs thus: "I would lead thee and bring thee into my mother's house, *who would instruct me*: I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine." The chief error here is in the punctuation, which should be as follows—"who would instruct me (תלמדני) that I should cause thee to drink,"—that is, "who would instruct me that I should welcome or entertain thee." Dr. Hodgson, not adverting to this error in the punctuation, inquires how is the original term "*who would instruct thee*," connected with the sense? and in what is she to be *instructed*? Incapable of resolving this question, he translates the Hebrew term literally תלמדני, Talmadni, and supposes it to be the name of the royal bride's mother. His version is therefore:

I would lead thee, I would cause thee to go
To the house of Talmadni my mother ;
I would make thee drink of spiced wine, &c.

Mr. Green, with a smaller deviation from the Bible rendering, but an equal misconception of the real meaning, translates thus :

I would bring thee into the apartment of her that conceived me,
That thou mightest be my guide.
I would give thee drink of the spiced wine, &c.

Houbigant, and Dr. Percy, dissatisfied with the common version, yet not knowing how to amend its sense, have proposed another acceptation of the Hebrew term, and contend that it should be translated "I would be constantly with thee," *Assidua essem tecum*. Now although it be true that the verb לְבַדִּי implies occasionally the idea of *habit, custom, or perseverance*, it does not fairly imply it in the sense here contended for : and I trust I have proved that there is no necessity for so forced a construction. Its obvious and general meaning is *to teach or instruct*. It is singular that the Italian translator Melesigenio has given the very same rendering as that offered in the text :

Menarti entro al soggiorno
Della madre potrei,
Ed istruitta da lei
Vin ben condito mescerti, e con esso
Delle mie melagrane il sugo espresso.

(⁶) *Pomegranate wine in tides for thee should flow.*] The juice of the pomegranate is often employed in the East to give a

pleasant sub-acid flavor to a variety of beverages; and where the laws of the Alcoran are not allowed to interpose, or their prohibitions are disregarded, a delicious wine is frequently manufactured from this juice alone.

(7) ————— *by all ye prize,* } This line
The graceful hind, the roe with luscious eyes. } does not
 occur in the copy from which our common Bible is translated,
 nor in any other edition of it which I have hitherto met with.
 It is found, however, in several of the manuscripts collated
 by Dr. Kennicott,—is introduced into the Septuagint version,
 and completes the iterative or intercalary strain in Idyl II.
 p. 13. as well as Idyl IV. (19). Dr. Hodgson and Mr. Green
 have both given it therefore in their respective versions, and I
 have followed their example.

NOTES ON IDYL XL.

(¹) *Lo ! who is this, from where the desert trends.*] “From the course or direction of the desert or wilderness ;” i. e. from that part of the royal pleasure-grounds which lay in the same quarter, as in Idyl V. p. 21. The expression, which refers obviously to the wanderings of the children of Israel for forty years in the desert of Sin, was proverbial among the Hebrews, and continues to be so to the present day among the Persians and Arabians. Thus Hafiz:

چو بحبيب نشيني و بادہ پيپاي
بياد آر حريبان بادہ پيمارا

O think on him, while banquets round thee blaze,
Who in the *wilderness of absence* strays.

Melesigenio is unquestionably wrong, therefore, in translating the passage “ Who is this who cometh *from solitary meadows*, languid, and leaning on her love ?”

Chi è costei, che viene
Dai pascoli romiti, e languida
Sul vago suo pendendo ?

(²) *'Twas here I first excited thee to love.*] This passage is not without its difficulties. The Hebrew writers attribute the

commencement of it, at least, to the bride on account of the Massoretic ך THEE, which, thus pointed, is of the masculine gender: by all the Greek fathers, however, and many of the Latin, the Massora is disregarded, and it is attributed to the bridegroom. The whole address indeed, to the end of the idyl, is ascribed to the latter by Dr. Geddes, who was a greater enemy to the Massoretic punctuation than even Capellus himself. I have acceded to the conjecture which refers it to the bridegroom, though not to the extent recommended by my late learned friend; the marks of a colloquy being in my opinion too obvious for rejection.

The whole phrase עורר תיך, which is literally 'I raised or stirred thee up,' is elegantly supposed by Mercerus to mean *ad amorem* 'to love,' *Excitavi te—nempe ad amorem*, 'I excited thee to love.' THERE thy mother, continues he, pledged or engaged thee—חבלתך: for at least in conjug. Kal the verb חבל is allowed to possess this sense, and no reason can be assigned why it should not, and even in a more solemn and obligatory manner, retain it in conjug. Pihel.—This illustration is so ingenious, and in my estimation so correct, that I could not avoid adopting it. It is also followed by Dr. Percy and Mr. Green, while Dr. Hodgson adheres to the Bible version with but little variation. Michaëlis renders it 'under the citron-tree I found thee: there thy mother contracted thee to me.' The pastoral costume is here well preserved; which supposes that the fair one yields to the suit of her lover, and that the consent of her parents is obtained beneath the shade of some picturesque or favorite tree.

Klopstok has so elegantly adverted to this passage in his admirable representation of the blooming and beautiful daughter

of Jairus, whom the Saviour of mankind raised from the dead, to be afterwards, as the poet informs us, united to the ingenuous Semida, son of the widow of Nain, who had experienced a similar resurrection,—that I cannot avoid presenting it for the entertainment of the reader. *Messias*, b. iv.

Neben ihr ging die sittsame Cidli, die tochter Jairus.
 Still in unschuld waren ihr kaum zwölf jahre verflossen,
 Als sie, dem jungen leben entblühend, heiter und freudig
 In die gefilde des friedens hinüberschlummerte. Todt lag
 Cidli vor dem auge der mutter. Da kam der *Messias*,
 Rief sie aus dem schlummer zurück, und gab sie der mutter.
 Heilig trägt sie die spuren der auferstehung; doch kennt sie
 Jene herrlichkeit nicht, mit der ihr leben gekrönt ist,
 Nicht die zartaufblühende schönheit der werdenden jugend,
 Noch ihr himmlisches herz, dir, edlere Liebe, gebildet.
 So ging, da sie erwuchs, der Israelitinnen schönste,
 Sulamith, als die mutter am apfelbaume sie weckte.
 Sanft rief sie der schlummernden tochter, mit lispelnder stimme
 Rief sie: Sulamith!—Sulamith folgte der führenden mutter,
 Unter die myrrhen, und unter die nacht einladender schatten,
 Wo, in wolken süsser gerüche, die himmlische Liebe
 Stand, und in ihr herz die ersten empfindungen hauchte,
 Und das verlangende zittern sie lehrte, den jüngling zu finden,
 Der, erschaffen für sie, diess heilige zittern auch fühlte.

The reader who cannot understand the beauties of the original must accept of the following imperfect version :

The modest Cidli next, whose tender years
 Scarce numbered twelve, with candid eye appears,

Daughter of Jairus. She in earlier day,
 Budding with beauty, innocent and gay,
 Slept in the peaceful field; invidious Death,
 E'en in her mother's sight, usurped her breath.
 Then came Messiah, and the slumbering fair
 Called back to life, and crowned her mother's prayer.
 Clear, in the heavenly radiance of her face,
 Her resurrection still maintained its trace;
 Yet knew not all her bliss the blooming maid,
 Nor all the charms of future youth displayed.
 But Love beheld, and claimed her. So uprose,
 Pride of the Hebrew fair, from light repose,
 'The lovely Shulamite—when from the shade,
 Where first her sight a mother's pangs repaid,
 Her mother called her;—and, in future hour,
 He called her too, whose heart confessed her power.
 Softly she called her; soft, in accent sweet,
 Her daughter called.—She heard the gentle greet,
 Obeyed, and followed where her mother led,
 Through groves of myrrh eternal night that shed,
 Where, wrapt in clouds of fragrance, Love unseen
 Stood, and her heart first touched with rapture keen;
 With fond desire th' enamored youth to find,
 Formed for herself, for her alike who pined.

(³) *Here first thy mother led thee to my arms.*] Not widely different Theocritus, Idyl 1A.

Ηρασθην μεν εγωγε, κορα, τευ ανικα πρατον
 Ηνθες εμα συν ματρι, θελοις' υακινθινα φυλλα
 Εξ ορεος δρεψασθαι.

First I beheld thy beauties, blooming maid !
 When o'er the hills, in every charm arrayed,
Thy mother led thee, and thy fingers fair
 Plucked the wild hyacinths that blossomed there.

(4) *Oh ! as a signet print it on thy heart.*] The custom here alluded to is common in most oriental countries even in the present day. It is given more largely, Esther viii. 8. "Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring ; for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse." So Jer. xxii. 24. "As I live," saith the Lord, "though Coniah, son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck him thence." These rings or signets were occasionally worn upon the bosom by means of an ornamental chain or other ligature fastened round the neck. Hence the advice of the author of the present poem in another book, Prov. vi. 12. "Bind them upon thine heart, tie them about thy neck : " and again, ch. vii. 3. "write them upon the table of thine heart."

(5) *Its flames are arrows*————] In the common version, "The coals thereof are coals of fire." In that of Dr. Percy, "The sparks thereof are sparks of fire." In the Septuagint, thus : Περιπτερα αὐτῆς περιπτερα πυρός—"The feathers" or "wings thereof are wings of fire." And by Dr. Hammond, to whose interpretation I have principally inclined, "The arrows thereof are arrows of fire."

(6) *Fierce as the flash when God's own thunders roll.*] In the copy whence our common Bible is translated it is written

שלהבתיה, and is interpreted “ which hath a most vehement flame:” but in not less than a hundred and twenty-four manuscripts and editions the word is divided שלהבת יה, and is consequently rendered by Dr. Hodgson, as it was before proposed by bishop Patrick, “ flame of God :”

The coals thereof are coals of fire, the flame of God.

The venial jealousy expressed in the present idyl, and which proves that it ought to be posterior to the preceding, which announces the confidential intercourse of the royal pair, is altogether appropriate to the character of the fair and newly selected bride; who beholds herself surrounded by a haram of rival beauties, and may well dread lest her beloved spouse should avail himself of the licence of the East, and desert her for some future favorite, as he had deserted some prior favorite for herself.—Here moreover is a strong additional reason for deviating from the opinion of Dr. Geddes, as hinted in note (2) of the idyl before us; and for applying the present passage to the enamored bride. Proceeding from her lips it is highly characteristic and in point; in the mouth of the royal bridegroom it would seem altogether irrelative and impertinent.

(7) *Unquenched by waters, drowned not by the main.*] So the undaunted Leander in pursuit of his fair Hero across the fatal Hellespont. Mus. 20S.

Παρθενε σου δι' ερωτα και αγριον οιδμα περησω,
Ει πυρι παφλαζοιτο, και απλοον εσσεται ιδωρ

Ου τρομεω βαρυ χευμα τεην μετ' ανευμενος ευνην,

Ου βρομον ηχηεντα βαρυγδουποιο θαλασσης.

For thee I'll dare the billows as they sweep,
Though lightnings fire th' innavigable deep;
Thy lamp in view, the boisterous path explore,
And spurn the thundering surges as they roar.

NOTES ON IDYL XII.

(¹) *Whose bosom boasts no captivating charms.*] “Who, unlike myself, is destitute of the *captivating* and *prominent attraction* of an ample fortune.” The image is equally obvious and beautiful. The property of the royal bride might have been derived from some collateral source; or her father might have died abruptly before he was apprised that her mother was pregnant with his younger sister; and hence the disparity of their situations.

(²) *Call her a wall—and o’er this wall shall tower
Two silver turrets of resistless power.* } The passage has never, that I know of, been satisfactorily explained by any commentator, and yet I think it is one of the most exquisite in the whole poem. The assaults of love are generally made, in the language of poetry, from the brilliant and piercing *eyes* of the fair assailant; and our author has not been inattentive to this elegant comparison, as the reader may see by reverting to Idyl VII. (²⁴). In the instance before us the imagery is admirably varied. The same sort of effect is produced, but the artillery is played from a different quarter. The fair one is now compared to the surrounding wall of a fortified city, which was often erected with consummate skill, and beautified with all the ornaments of architecture. Over different parts of the wall were projected towers or turrets for the purpose of repelling the assailing foe; in the construction and finish of which the skill of the artist was principally exerted. The royal bard

has already in several instances alluded to the consummate elegance and symmetry of buildings of this description, and particularly in Idyl IX: where, on account of their brilliant polish, they are called *towers of ivory*, as they are here *towers of silver*. Having generally resembled then the sister of the royal bride to the beautiful and ornamental wall of a fortified city, how delicate and exquisite is the comparison of her white and swelling bosom to the white and swelling turrets projected from its surface—to those elegant but dangerous prominences which were equally formed for the purpose of attack or repulsion, and which no man, in either case, could approach without extreme peril!—"We will give her," replies the enamored monarch, "the ornament in which she is deficient. Like the unrivalled turrets of the wall that surrounds Jerusalem—it shall project from her person with an equal admixture of captivating elegance and irresistible impression.—The *prominent charm* of an ample dowry shall immediately be her own."—That this is the real meaning of the passage there can be no doubt, from the reply of the royal bride which immediately follows, in which she expressly compares her own bosom to two elegant towers of a wall of this description, and asserts that it was by the artillery of these towers that she subdued the heart of her royal lover.

Duport has here lost the image entirely by using the word *palace* for *tower*. "If she be a wall," says he, "we will build upon her a *palace* of silver."

Murus si fuerit, *palatium* illi
Argento e nitido superstruemus.

Francisco de Figueroa has an idea somewhat similar in one of his sonnets, though far less spirited and appropriate:

Mi esperanza y deseo combatian
Una torre gentil alta y cerrada
De muros diamante ; cuya entrada
 Honestidad y alteza defendian.

My hopes and heart conspire to storm
 That *stately tower* of graceful form :
Its walls are diamonds, blazing bright,
 And pride and virtue guard their height,

So Shakespear, in King John,

—————O my gentle Hubert,
 We owe thee much : within this *wall* of flesh
 There is a soul counts thee her creditor,

(³) *Call her a door, and cedars shall encase*] “She shall be the graceful entrance to my favor and friendship.” This comparison on account of its elegance is deservedly coupled with the foregoing. The metaphor of *a door* is not uncommon in the sacred scriptures. Thus John x. 9. “I am the *door* : through me if any man enter in he shall be saved.”

So Psalm cxli. 3.

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth,
 Keep thou *the door* of my lips.

(⁴) *Wide o'er the range of Baal-hamon's plains.*] The royal bride now returns to the immediate point she had in view—which was that of requesting her beloved monarch to consign

the estate which, prior to her marriage, she had possessed in Baal-hamon, and which now appertained to himself as a part of the dowry she had brought him, to her younger and unendowed sister. Of the extent of this estate, or vineyard, as it is poetically denominated, we do not exactly know: but we can at least collect that it was very considerable, since it was leased out to a variety of tenants, of whom every one paid a clear rental of a thousand shekels of silver; and which, when it was in possession of the royal bride, had been annually collected by the stewards of her household; who for this part of their office were each of them allowed a salary of two hundred shekels, or something less than 25 *l.* sterling; the silver shekel being equal to about 2*s.* 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* of our own coin. Baal-hamon is conjectured by Mr. Harmer to have lain in the neighbourhood of Balbec, and in the delightful valley of Bocat; which, in the language of Mr. Wood, "might by a little care be made one of the richest and most beautiful spots in Syria; for it is more fertile than the celebrated vale of Damascus, and better watered than the rich plains of Esdraelon and Rama." *Account of the Ruins of Balbec*, p. 5.

(5) *Pride of the palm-tree shades!*——] The common version is feeble: "Thou that dwellest in the gardens!" And I am indebted to Dr. Geddes for the present variation. The original words **חֶבֶרֶם מְקֻשֶׁבֶת**, the latter of which is synonymous with the same term in Arabic, implies that the gardens here spoken of were of a most beautiful species of palm-tree: and the literal rendering is therefore—

O thou dweller in the gardens of beautiful palm-trees!

Or, since the fair bride herself is compared to a palm-tree in Idyl IX.

O thou beauty of the palm-tree gardens!

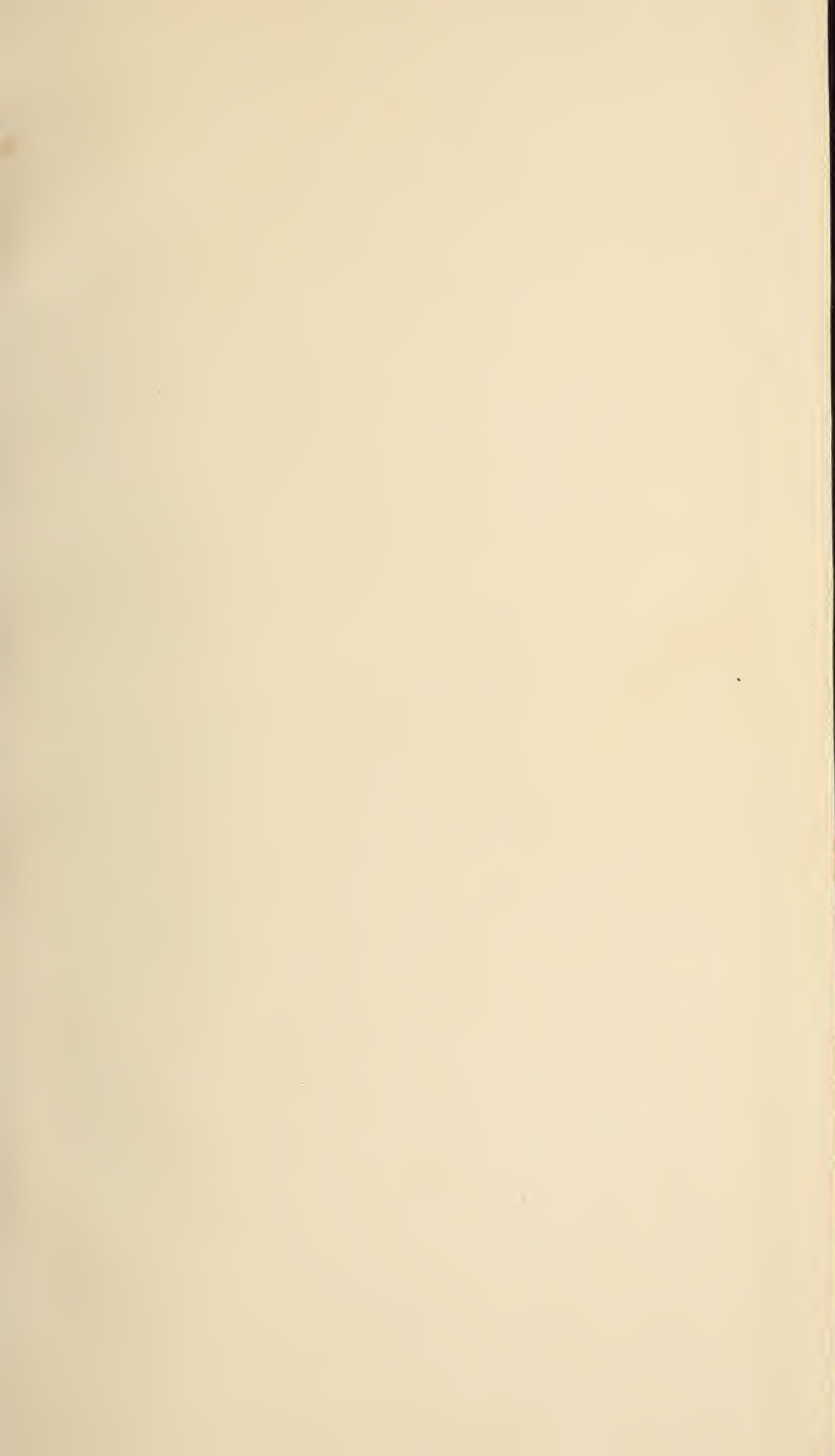
as it is given in the text. The royal bridegroom assents instantaneously to her request.

The whole passage is exquisitely rendered by Dupont, and with a surprising similarity to the present version :

At ô quæ incolis hortu'os amœnos,
 Attendant tibi cum tuæ sodales,
 Mellitamque tuam hauriant loquelam,
 Vocem audire tuam et mihi licebit?
 Festines, precor, advoles, amice,
 Velox ut caprea, hinnulusve, odora
 Transcurrens juga, aromatumque montes.

(⁶) *Haste o'er the mountains like the bounding hart.*] She has before resembled him, Idyl III. p. 14, in perfect congruity with the imagery of the East, to the same rapid and light-footed animal. The metaphor is not confined to the orientals: we meet with it, and employed with equal advantage, in the *Fingal* of Ossian, b. i. "Comest thou like a *roe* from Malmor? like a *hart* from the echoing hills? Hail, thou son of Rossa!"—Gessner, struck with the beauty of the similitude, has copied it in his *Thyrsis* and *Menalkas*: So sprach er, und hüpfte vor freude, wie eine junge ziege im mayenthäu hupft. "He said, and leaped for joy as leaps the *bounding kid* amid the dews of May."

FINIS.





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